STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PLAN (SEP)

QLEAP AF TA

Directorate of Primary Education (DPE)

Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (MOPME)

May 2021

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1. Introduction

The Additional Financing Technical Assistance of QLEAP (QLEAP AF TA) would support the three priority activity areas for investments – preprimary education, teacher development and learning assessment – as identified in the Government's Education Sector Analysis and draft Education Sector Plan 2021-2023. The AF will further help deepen the Government's efforts in quality school education service delivery through aligning with the 4th Primary Education Development Program's (PEDP4) Program Development Objective with links to the secondary education program and the GPE strategic goals of quality, equity and efficiency.

2. Brief Description of QLEAP AF TA

The QLEAP AF will provide TA to support expertise for professional training programs and institutional capacity building for student assessments. Specifically, the TA will entail the following activities:

Leadership training for headteachers in preprimary education management: The AF will also provide TA to support DPE and NAPE to introduce a leadership training program for head teachers of schools offering PPE. The training will aim to improve headteachers' leadership, which has been shown to improve child outcomes[1]. This will include their understanding of ECD and support for play-based PPE provision within a school, as well as classroom observation, providing feedback and coaching to PPE teachers, and monitoring and communicating children's development to parents in efforts to ensure better child development outcomes and readiness for primary school. Given the COVID-19 pandemic and need for system resilience building, the online delivery of this training program will be considered.

Enhance National Assessment Cell (NAC) institutional capacity: Under PEDP4, a Primary Education Board (PEB) is planned to be established with the necessary capacity and resources to lead the design and administration of Primary Education Completion Examination (PECE), National Student Assessment (NSA), and school-based terminal tests. While the draft legislative Act for PEB has been prepared, it will require cabinet approval and its eventual set-up may take up to several years. During this time, the examination and assessment activities are proceeding under the National Assessment Cell (NAC) of the DPE[2]. The AF will provide TA to upgrade the NSA to an 'Established' stage as defined

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[1] School leadership is widely recognized as central to school quality and children's learning (Bloom et al, 2015; Branch et al. 2013). Indeed, among school-related factors, leadership is second only to teacher quality in impact on student learning. A growing body of research points to the potential of early childhood education (ECE) leadership development as a potential catalyst for positive change in the field (Goffin & Janke, 2013).

[2] The NAC was established in 2006 but lacks the technical and financial resources to operate in full capacity. It has carried out four rounds of NSA in 2011, 2013, 2015, and 2017 and the next round is planned for 2021. These NSA rounds have been conducted with the support of TA from DPs.

in the System Approach for Better Education Results (SABER) framework[3]. The AF will support in-house expertise and capacity development building of the NAC for planning, implementing, and utilizing data from learning assessments for policy and operations. The TA will support technical experts to work with NAC in areas where local expertise remains underdeveloped. The expertise gaps identified include specialists in institutional capacity building; test development and language content; and psychometrics[4]. The technical capacity built within NAC will be transferred to the PEB once it is established to ensure sustainability of the AF activities. For NAC to advance to Established stage, concrete steps will need to be taken to ensure the sustainability of NAC with approved organogram and staffing.

Strengthening links to between primary and post-primary education: The AF will also provide TA to help strengthen the linkage between primary and secondary education. The GPE AF will provide TA to the Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education (DSHE) in the following areas:

a) *Development of a teacher training curriculum on soft skills development and assessment:* Technical expertise will support the preparation of an online teacher training program to help primary, secondary and TVET teachers (including those in religious streams) develop and assess soft skills of students. The teacher training program will build on a similar face-to-face training conducted on a small scale by the British Council as well as global best practices in the field to best match the local needs.

b) *Joint training and knowledge exchange programs in learning assessments*: Large scale national student assessment are carried out in both primary (Grade 3 and 5) and secondary (Grade 6 and 8) levels. However, there is a need to promote the use of these assessment findings for policy development and knowledge sharing across the basic education school system. The AF will provide TA to support knowledge sharing events (workshops, trainings and dissemination events) to build basic school system (including TVET and religious stream) institutional capacity and promote a holistic approach to reviewing system performance and informing streamlined policies.

c) *Feasibility of remote examination system:* A comprehensive study on the examination practices in primary and lower secondary grades (Grade 1-10) will be conducted through TA support[5]. The COVID-19 pandemic has posed uncertainty on the examination and assessment system and subsequently created a lag in grade terminal examination completion. The GPE AF will support the review of the current examination practice and the feasibility of a remote examination system in Bangladesh.

d) *Development of a teacher training curriculum to improve remote teaching skills in TVET*: The AF will provide expertise to help develop an online/blended short-course training program to help TVET instructors to enhance their remote teaching skills. This will include introduction to digital

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[3] Bangladesh's learning assessment system is currently at the 'Developing' stage, as defined in the System Approach for Better Education Results (SABER) framework.

[4] The institutional capacity building specialist will design and develop the NAC staffing and work plans. The test development and language content specialist will provide TA on overall assessment design and test development and support the Bangla/literacy and Math/numeracy in-house test experts on subject testing. The psychometrician will provide training on psychometrics and data analysis and support the NAC with expert reviews and inputs for designing national assessments.

[5] This study may be extended to technical and religious streams.

platforms, effective pedagogy and lesson delivery, assessment, among others critical skills for remote teaching learning. This course is expected to also help madrasah/religious stream of education, where TVET courses are expected to be introduced soon.

e) *Study on remote TVET delivery*: The AF will provide expertise to conduct a study on feasibility of remote teaching, assessment and examination practices in TVET.

3. Objectives of the Stakeholder Engagement Plan

The overall objective of this Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) is to define a plan for stakeholder engagement, including public information disclosure and consultation, throughout the entire duration of the proposed QLEAP AF TA. The SEP outlines the ways in which the IA will communicate with stakeholders and includes a mechanism by which people can raise concerns, provide feedback, or make complaints about any activities related to the QLEAP AF TA.

4. Stakeholder identification and analysis

The stakeholders are defined as individuals, groups or other entities who:

(i)   are impacted or likely to be impacted directly or indirectly, positively or adversely, by the program (also known as '***affected parties***'); and

(ii)   may have an interest in the program ('***interested parties***'). They include individuals or groups whose interests may be affected by the program and who have the potential to influence the outcomes in any way.

Cooperation and negotiation with the stakeholders throughout the QLEAP AF TA development often also require the identification of persons within the groups who act as legitimate representatives of their respective stakeholder group, i.e. the individuals who have been entrusted by their fellow group members with advocating the groups' interests in the process of engagement with the program.

4.1 Affected parties

Affected Parties for the QLEAP AF TA will include pre-primary, primary and junior secondary level students and their parents and teachers. Specifically, the following individuals and groups fall within this category:

- Pre-primary and Primary teachers and head teachers
- Secondary teachers, TVET instructor, Religious Stream Teachers
- Student assessors at pre-primary and primary levels
- Local education officers
- Government and DPE officials working on assessment and training programs

4.2 Other interested parties

The stakeholders also include parties other than the directly affected communities, including:

- Officials of Government agencies, directly and indirectly linked with QLEAP AF TA, either local or central
- National and international NGOs engaged in education
- Traditional media
- Participants/ influencers of social media

- Other national & international NGOs
- Development partners
- Individuals interested in education
- The public at large

4.3 Vulnerable Groups

- Older teachers and other beneficiaries
- Beneficiaries living in areas of low Internet access
- Physically disabled teachers and beneficiaries

5. Stakeholder Engagement Program

5.1. Summary of stakeholder engagement done during preparation

Given the emergency nature of this operation and the transmission dynamics of COVID-19, consultations have been limited to telephone interviews, e-mails, etc. In particular, the team had discussions with a number of key government agencies including MOPME, Secondary and Higher Education Division (SHED) of MOE, DPE, Education Local Consultative Group (ELCG), Pre-primary Education Unit of DPE, National Assessment Council (NAC), National Academy for Primary Education (NAPE) and National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB). The program paper was also circulated to all concerned to get their views. The program design has thus included beneficiaries from the poor and vulnerable section of the society. The SEP is a live document and when situation improves, vulnerable groups and others will be consulted in person and the document will be updated. The outcome of the Consultations is summarized below:

Ser	Venue and Time	Participants	Discussion	Decision
1	Meeting with ELCG Members on QAR 1 and ESP; 29th April 2020, Zoom Meeting	Representatives from Education Local Consultative Group (ELCG), MoPME	Funding Modality of ESPIG Area of activities under TA TA component on PPE, Assessment	ELCG is the largest Education Network in Bangladesh, comprised of all relevant government agencies, Development Partners, NGOs and CSOs working in education sector. The ELCG members highlighted the various issues of balancing quality while expanding access in PPE and recommended to consider activities for addressing the issue. It was clarified that the TA component will address this to certain extent, while the pilot will be designed with these issues in consideration. The ELCG also endorsed the approach to help build in-house capacity of DPE for conducting national student assessments, while also introducing classroom observation tool to assess teaching practices and formative assessment capacity building for teachers. The TA component would enable MoPME/DPE to initiate the institutional capacity building in the meantime. All comments relevant were incorporated and endorsed by the ELCG.
2	Meeting with PPE division of DPE; 3:30 PM -5 PM, July 15, 2020	PPE Division of DPE	DPE progress status of designing 2 years of piloting; Information collection related to PPE;	(Pre- Primary Education) PPE Unit of DPE will be leading to develop a comprehensive roadmap of the planned piloting. The PPE Unit will be sharing the finalized minutes of the technical committee meeting with World Bank Education Team. DPE will update World Bank Education Team with following: (i) Duration of existing PPE Class (ii) Salary grade of PPE teachers, (iii) Total amount disbursed for PPE Play

			Next Steps for PPE component design for additional financing	materials in GPS from 2018- 2020. DPE will be providing this information by July 26, 2020. Discussion Meeting with WB Education Team to discuss school selection criteria for piloting and developing the roadmap.
3	Meeting with NAC of DPE; 2:00 PM- 3:30 PM, July 16, 2020	NAC Division of DPE	Current Status of NAC and their activity progress	The Concept Note was distributed widely sharing through email for stakeholder comments through DPE for including local education offices, teachers etc. Further consultations with relevant divisions of DPE such as PPE and NAC were also held. GPE will finance technical expert/consultants who will work closely with the Assessment Unit to ensure that Staffs at the Unit are capable of overseeing the collection, management, analysis, and publication of a report based on learning data. These are technical expertise we are proposing the AF to finance: 1. Psychometrician, 2. Test Development and language content specialist, 3. any other expert identified following consultation with DPE
4	Meeting on Project Paper; 31st August, 8:00 PM- 9:00 PM	MoPME, DPE, NAPE, NCTB	Detailed discussion on component design, TA component. Key Actions	For DPE, the AF will support expertise for professional training programs and institutional capacity building for government officials working on student assessments. Specifically, the TA will support DPE in the development and delivery of online training for advanced training for preprimary teachers; leadership for headteachers in preprimary education management and institutional capacity building for student assessments. Further consultations will be done for the GPE 2nd and 3rd round review as it is part of the GPE funding requirement

Further to above, the Implementing Agency completed a joint field visit from February 04 – 06, 2020 which involved visit to six Government Primary Schools, one Primary Teachers Training Institute (PTI) , and office of District Primary Education Officer where multiple consultations were organized with teachers, school managements, students, parents of students, local education offices to understand implementation status and areas of improvement. The consultations ranged from quality education services to infrastructural facilities, monitoring and supervision, fund management and access to education. Since Out –of –school- children (OOSC) is covered under 4th Primary Education Development Education (PEDP4), local education officials also highlighted the implemented activities and challenges associated in this sub-component of the program. Additionally, the World Bank team arranged field visits to schools, catering the education demand of OOSC cohorts under PEDP4, to assess the enrollment status and quality of the education service.

As for ongoing consultation, DPE conducts monthly Program Coordination Meeting in presence of all relevant agencies involved under PEDP4 program (e.g. NCTB, Bureau of Non-Formal Education (BNFE), LGED, DPHE, National Academy for Primary Education (NAPE)). Five financing development partners (WB,ADB, JICA, EU, UNICEF) along with other development partners regularly arrange consultation meeting on implementation progress, challenges and way forward for relevant DLIs and sub-component of program. Two Joint Consultative Missions and One Joint Annual Review Meetings (JARM) are arranged annually to discuss and analyze the progress, confirm the result verification in presence of Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (MoPME), DPE, NCTB, IMED, BNFE, NAPE, LGED, DPHE. DPHE and LGED provide bi-annual report based on the implementation findings from field, which includes interaction with local education offices, school officials, school management committee (SMC). DPE centrally administers and monitors school level activities with their well-spread local level education officials who are mandated to monitor the administrative and classroom activities of school. These regular activities largely include interaction with students, parents, teachers, SMC officials. All those findings are reported back to DPE office. The program also engages Independent Verification agency, Implementation Monitoring and Evaluation Division (IMED), to monitor and verify the progress of DLI targets.

Lessons from the engagement activities include designing consultation fitting the need of specific groups of people, especially those of the vulnerable and disadvantaged communities. Separate engagement with women and other disadvantaged groups have been planned and will be implemented accordingly. COVID situation-specific engagement, avoiding face to face contacts, online meeting, and where applicable meeting with project beneficiaries using social distancing method and use PPEs have been planned where virtual means of engagement is not possible.

The stakeholder engagement is an ongoing process and given the COVID19 situation and number of challenges have been faced. The online base stakeholder engagement has its both pros and cons. On the positive side—it reduces time and the need for travel, eliminates the risk of COVID transfer. The pandemic has provided enough acclimatization of all parties to use online platform which was lagging thus far. Public officials are now more accustomed and keener to use this platform, giving the philosophy of Digital Bangladesh a needed momentum. However, on the negative side, all the stakeholders especially the disadvantaged and the vulnerable, who lack access to the system face difficulty to raise concerns and be consulted. Field visits by Borrower personnel on a limited scale answers the problem, albeit temporarily. Therefore, this is scope to either bring large number of vulnerable people under the digital umbrella, providing them with access and means to take part in the decision making. This is a very good lesson that has been learnt and effort to bring the system door to door, especially those who lack access is on the table.

5.2. Summary of stakeholder needs and methods, tools and techniques for stakeholder engagement

The Implementing Agency (IA) will engage with various stakeholders on an ongoing basis taking the risk of virus spread into account, both during and post COVID-19 pandemic. The details will be documented in the updates to this SEP throughout the implementation period of the QLEAP AF TA. It should always be borne in mind that mass gatherings of consultation meeting may contribute to the transmission of respiratory pathogens, such as the virus causing the current outbreaks of COVID-19. Various alternative means may be used to ensure continued meaningful consultation. Further, the World Health Organization's (WHO) mass gathering guidance can be sought (Key Planning Recommendations for Mass Gatherings in the context of the current COVID-19 outbreak, Feb 14, 2020 (*available at: https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/331004/WHO-2019-nCoV-POEmassgathering-2020.1-eng.pdf*). Stakeholders with different need have been assessed and they will be consulted through online medium, radio, TV broadcast, miking, postering, and limited FGDs (if allowed under COVID). Limited door to door consultation will only be permitted if situation improves. Vulnerable groups (women, children, person with disability) will continuously be consulted keeping culturally and socially appropriate means, for example keeping women moderators and staffs for consultation with women, women only consultation points, timing suitable for working women, accessibility considerations for the persons with disability etc.

5.3. Stakeholder Engagement Plan and Strategy for Information Disclosure

STAGE	TOPIC OF CONSULTATION / MESSAGE	METHOD USED	TARGET STAKEHOLDERS	RESPONSIBILITIES
Preparation	• *Need of the QLEAP AF TA* • Planned activities including details of Technical Assistance • E&S principles, risk and impact, management • Grievance Redress mechanisms (GRM)	• *Phone, email, letters* • *Appropriate adjustments to be made to take into account the need for social distancing for COVID (use of audio-visual materials, technologies such as telephone calls, SMS, emails, etc.)*	*Interested Parties*	Environment and Social Focal Point of IA
	• *Need of the QLEAP AF TA* • Planned activities including training and assessment	• *Outreach activities that are situation appropriate* • *Appropriate adjustments to be made to take into account the need for social distancing for*	*Affected parties*	Environment and Social Focal Point of IA

STAGE	TOPIC OF CONSULTATION / MESSAGE	METHOD USED	TARGET STAKEHOLDERS	RESPONSIBILITIES
	• E&S risk and impact, management • Grievance Redress mechanisms (GRM)	*COVID (use of audio-visual materials, technologies such as telephone calls, SMS, emails, etc.)*		
Implementation	• *Scope and ongoing activities* • *SEP and LMP* • *GRM*	• *Online Training and workshops* • *Disclosure of information through Brochures, flyers, website, Radio, TV etc.* • *Information desks at IA office* • *Appropriate adjustments to be made to take into account the need for social distancing for COVID (use of audio-visual materials, technologies such as telephone calls, SMS, emails, etc.)*	*Interested Parties*	Environment and Social Focal Point of IA
	• *Scope and ongoing activities* • *SEP and LMP* • *GRM* • *Health and safety Concerns*	• *Online Training and Workshops* • *Brochures, posters, Radio, TV etc* • *Information desks in IA Office* • *Appropriate adjustments to be made to take into account the need for social distancing for COVID (use of audio-visual materials, technologies such as telephone calls, SMS, emails, radio, tv etc.). The engagement with vulnerable parties (older teacher, disabled teachers etc) should be taken in to consideration for training delivery. Face to face interaction while providing training may be necessary due to their likely inability to use virtual means, keeping in provision of COVID-19 protocols.*	*Affected parties*	Environment and Social Focal Point of IA

6. Resources and Responsibilities for implementing stakeholder engagement activities

6.1. Resources

The Implementing Agency (IA) will be in charge of stakeholder engagement activities. The contact point for the stakeholder engagement will be the Program Director (PD). The program has budgetary provisions for SEP implementation and the E&S focal point of IA will monitor it. The budget for the SEP (and the implementation of other environment and social activities such as LMP) is approximately USD 25,000.

6.2. Management functions and responsibilities

The IA will be responsible for carrying out stakeholder engagement activities, while working closely with other entities, such as local government units, media outlets, NGOs, development partners, school administrations etc. The stakeholder engagement activities will be documented through quarterly progress reports, to be shared with the World Bank.

7. Grievance Mechanism

The main objective of a Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) is to assist resolving complaints and grievances in a timely, effective and efficient manner that satisfies all parties involved. Specifically, it provides a transparent and credible process for fair, effective and lasting outcomes.

The stakeholder GRM for the QLEAP AF TA activities will be integrated into the existing program GRM. The existing program GRM comprises of: (i) monthly and quarterly stakeholder consultations organized by Upazila Education Committee and chaired by the administrative head of the Upazila, where stakeholders discuss issues and try to resolve them; (ii) semi-annual "open floor" discussions arranged by DPE with stakeholders, headed by the DG DPE,

where various issues presented by stakeholders are discussed and resolved, or forwarded (with a timeline) for further investigation; and (iii) a dedicated section on GRM and submission of complaints on the DPE website (http://www.dpe.gov.bd/). Under QLEAP PforR, the DPE is required to submit GRM reports to the WB bi-annually. The existing GRM handles the case of GBV GRM with the principles of confidentiality, survivor safety and security and is survivor-centric. While handling the case of GBV, the GRM only provides information on survivors age and sex, whether the complaint was project related, if the survivor was referred and a basic description of the incident.

Step 1: The complainant will be advised to settle the complaint through the Upazilla Education Committee. It will endeavor to solve the problem within a week. The problem and solution will be recorded in the Grievance Log kept with the Committee.

Step 2: Should the complaint not be addressed within a week; the Complainant will take the matter to the Director Administration DPE, either via digital means or of situation permits by physical presence. The complaint will be recorded and it will be solved within two weeks. The problem and solution will be recorded in the Grievance Log.

Step 3: If Step 2 fails to resolve the issue, the DG DPE will be involved centrally to solve the issue in question within two weeks and the complainant will be informed of the timeline to solve the issue. The problem and solution will be recorded in the Grievance Log.

The complainant will not be barred to seek legal remedies.

Following three Grievance Registers will be maintained:

> **Intake Register**: (1) Case number, (2) Date of receipt, (3) Name of complainant, (4) Gender, (5) Father or husband, (6) Complete address, (7) Main objection (8) Complainants' story and expectation with evidence, and (9) Previous records of similar grievances.

> **Resolution Register**: (1) Serial no., (2) Case no.,(3) Name of complainant, (4) Complainant's story and expectation, (5) Date of hearing, (6) Date of field investigation (if any), (7) Results of hearing and field investigation, (8) Decision of GRC, (9) Progress (pending, solved), and (10) Agreements or commitments.

> **Closing Register**: (1) Serial no., (2) Case no., (3) Name of complainant, (4) Decisions and response to complainants, (5) Mode and medium of communication, (6) Date of closing, (7) Confirmation of complainants' satisfaction, and (8) Management actions to avoid recurrence.

The registers will not include any information on GBV complaints. For GBV, a different mode of registration (without specificity of the complainants) will be kept under lock and key and digital security which can only be accessible by designated persons from the PMU.

The GRM for the AF TA activities will be integrated into the existing program GRM. The existing program GRM comprises of: (i) monthly and quarterly stakeholder consultations organized by Upazila Education Committee and chaired by the administrative head of the Upazila, where stakeholders discuss issues and try to resolve them; (ii) semi-annual "open floor" discussions arranged by DPE with stakeholders, headed by the DG DPE, where various issues presented by stakeholders are discussed and resolved, or forwarded (with a timeline) for further investigation; and (iii) a dedicated section on GRM and submission of complaints on the DPE website (http://www.dpe.gov.bd/). Under QLEAP PforR, the DPE is required to submit GRM reports to the WB bi-annually.

Any Gender Based Violence (GBV) related complaints will be handled in a survivor-centric manner in line with the World Bank guidelines provided in the WB good practice note on GBV. GBV-related complaints will be dealt with strict confidentiality, based on the wishes of the GBV-survivor. Training on GBV GRM will be imparted to Grievance Redress Committees. The Implementing Agency will assign trained staffs to handle cases of GBV related complain in the GRM channel. Training of the assigned tasks will be provided in consultation with the World bank Social team.

The GRM of MoPME and DPE follows the Revised Grievance Redress System Guideline 2018 of Government of Bangladesh. In first year of implementation, 413 complaints were received. The types of complaints vary from

corruption, appointment, posting, fund handling, bribe and harassments. The complaints were lodged by students' guardians, teachers, head teachers, Upazilla Education Officers (UEO), DPEO and other education officials. The complaints were addressed promptly and resolved through taking action or results in forms of 76 investigations under progress, while 21 cases assigned with specific investigation officers, 30 cases decided to be filed (Nothivukto), 6 cases are rejected on the non-investigable ground.

8. Monitoring and Reporting

8.1. Reporting back to stakeholder groups

The SEP will be periodically revised and updated as necessary in the course of implementation in order to ensure that the information presented herein is consistent and is the most recent, and that the identified methods of engagement remain appropriate and effective in relation to the context and specific phases of the development. Information on public engagement activities undertaken by the IA may be conveyed to the stakeholders in two ways:

- Publication of a standalone annual report on interaction with the stakeholders.
- A number of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) will be monitored by the IA on a regular basis, including the following parameters:
    - Number of consultation meetings (virtual) and other public discussions/forums conducted monthly, quarterly, and annually;
    - Frequency of public engagement activities;
    - Number of public grievances received monthly, quarterly, and annually and number of those resolved within the prescribed timeline;
    - Number of press materials published/broadcasted in the local, regional, and national media.