

PROJECT INFORMATION DOCUMENT (PID)

Report No.: AB869

Project Name	Iraq: Emergency Textbook Provision Project
Region	Middle East and North Africa
Sector	Primary education (50%), Secondary Education (50%)
Project ID	P088945
Recipient	Ministry of Education of the Iraqi Governing Council
Implementing Agency	Ministry of Education of the Iraqi Governing Council
Environment Category	<input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> FI <input type="checkbox"/> TBD (to be determined)
Safeguard Classification	<input type="checkbox"/> S ₁ <input type="checkbox"/> S ₂ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> S ₃ <input type="checkbox"/> S _F <input type="checkbox"/> TBD (to be determined)
Date PID Prepared	May 19, 2004
Date of Negotiations	May 4, 2004
Date of signing of the Grant Agreement	May 15, 2004

NOTE: The provision of textbooks covered in this project was originally to be financed through the Emergency School Rehabilitation Project (P087907), of US\$60 million, which is under preparation concurrently.

1. Country and Sector Background

The education system in Iraq was once considered one of the best in the region. Since the 1980s it has deteriorated substantially in terms of access, quality and equity at all levels as a result of three major wars, over a decade of sanctions and decades of under-funding and official neglect. Massive backlogs in capital development and maintenance, human resource and policy and system development have accumulated and present a major challenge to the reconstruction of the education system. The priorities identified in the UNDG/WB Joint Needs Assessment represent a national consensus and were endorsed by the Minister of Education at a meeting in Amman in October 2003 attended by senior officials from the Ministry of Education (MOE) and from the World Bank, UNICEF, UNESCO, USAID and the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA). These priorities are included in the MOE Situation Analysis (“Education in Iraq: Current Situation and New Perspectives”) of December 2003.

During the Amman consultation in October 2003, agreement was reached between the MOE and Iraq’s major development partners on the following priorities: (i) capacity building for the development of a strategic framework for the sector, (ii) emergency rehabilitation and supplies (including textbooks), (iii) initiating curriculum reform process, (iv) addressing immediate needs in teacher training, and (v) initiating policy dialogue on technical/vocational education and training (TVET).

Recurrent costs, including teacher salaries, will be covered by the CPA/Iraq Budget for MOE in 2004, and financed from the country’s budget thereafter. Teacher supply is not a problem in Iraq, although there is a need for teacher upgrading and reform of teacher policy.

The education sector's capacity-building needs will be initially addressed through an education component of the first Capacity Building Project.

2. Rationale for the Bank's Involvement

International experience of education reform and reconstruction in post-conflict societies underlines the importance of quick and visible high impact activities to address the most urgent system needs backed by intensive capacity-building for the education authorities. This is necessary to lay the groundwork for the development of a comprehensive education strategy aligned with the emerging wider development vision of the new political authorities. The successful resumption of schooling in Iraq in September 2003 was an important achievement. However, the education sector remains fragile, and recent momentum can only be maintained if the minimum conditions for learning are established in schools for the 2004/2005 school year, accompanied by a more comprehensive process of capacity-building for wider system reform and modernization. The support for school rehabilitation and textbooks will be complemented by a range of capacity building activities in key policy areas such as education reform, education management, teacher policy, curriculum development, TVET and Higher Education conducted in the first instance through the Capacity Building Project-I.

The need for repair and rehabilitation of schools is substantial. The MOE Situation Analysis, building on the UN/WB Joint Needs Assessment, identified almost US\$700 million in urgent repair and reconstruction needs over the next three years, and US\$80 million per year in textbook requirements. Of the 12,000 schools requiring repair, over 4,600 require major repair and reconstruction, and around 1,300 need to be demolished and rebuilt. UNICEF is committed to repair and rehabilitation of 300 schools in 2004; USAID will commit to repair and reconstruction a portion of the US\$87 million allocated from the US\$18.6 billion Supplemental Allocation in 2004. The MOE is looking to the Bank for support in meeting its target, based on the UNDG/WB Joint Needs Assessment, of repair and rehabilitation of all damaged schools over four years.

The World Bank is well positioned to play a leading role in both reconstruction and capacity-building for reform. It has considerable experience in supporting large scale textbook provision projects in post-conflict settings. The Bank was the lead agency for education in the UNDG/WB Joint Needs Assessment, and has worked closely with UNICEF, UNESCO, USAID and CPA. It has established a good working relationship with the MOE, building on the October meeting in Amman, weekly telephone conference calls and the January visit of the Minister and a high level delegation to the Bank in Washington.

3. Objectives

The principal objective of the project is to improve conditions of learning in primary and secondary schools through the urgent provision of primary and secondary school textbooks.

4. Description

The project will have 2 components:

Component 1: Provision and distribution of textbooks and teaching/learning materials for primary and secondary schools (US\$39.5 million)

Printing and distribution of textbooks and teaching and learning materials for the school year 2004/5, identified by the MOE to meet needs indicated in the UNDG/WB Joint Needs Assessment and the MOE Situation Analysis.

Component 2: Project Management and Capacity Building (US\$0.5 million)

Project management support will cover the operating costs of the Project Management Team (PMT) including the provision of furniture, equipment, technical assistance and training necessary for the management of the project. Salary costs of PMT staff, except consultants, will be covered by the MOE recurrent budget.

5. Project Financing

Source:	(\$m.)
RECIPIENT (in-kind contribution)	15.0
SPECIAL FINANCING (TRUST FUND GRANT)	40.0
Total	55.0

6. Safeguard Policies

Safeguard Policies Triggered by the Project	Yes	No
Environmental Assessment (OP/BP/GP 4.01)	[]	[X]
Natural Habitats (OP/BP 4.04)	[]	[X]
Pest Management (OP 4.09)	[]	[X]
Cultural Property (OPN 11.03, being revised as OP 4.11)	[]	[X]
Involuntary Resettlement (OP/BP 4.12)	[]	[X]
Indigenous Peoples (OD 4.20, being revised as OP 4.10)	[]	[X]
Forests (OP/BP 4.36)	[]	[X]
Safety of Dams (OP/BP 4.37)	[]	[X]
Projects in Disputed Areas (OP/BP/GP 7.60)*	[]	[X]
Projects on International Waterways (OP/BP/GP 7.50)	[]	[X]

7. Implementation

The MOE will have overall responsibility for the coordination and execution of all project activities, and will be guided by a Project Advisory Committee (PAC) chaired by a representative of the MOE and comprising members from the Ministries of Planning and Development Cooperation, and Finance. The Committee will meet at least twice a year to: (a)

* By supporting the proposed project, the Bank does not intend to prejudice the final determination of the parties' claims on the disputed areas

ensure accomplishment of the project objective, (b) oversee and guide project design, (c) facilitate coordination with key ministries and donors, (d) monitor key project indicators, and (e) ensure adequate operational and maintenance funding. The PAC will endorse annual plans and budget allocations.

A “core team” of senior MOE staff and consultants (where expertise is lacking) will constitute the Project Management Team (PMT). This PMT will also have responsibility for the concurrent US\$60 million Emergency School Rehabilitation Project (ESRP). The key staff of the PMT will receive special training and orientation in key aspects of project management. The PMT will be responsible for planning and coordination of all project activities, financial management (accounting and disbursements), procurement of works, goods and consulting services (and related contract management), and monitoring and evaluation to ensure timely implementation and coordination of all project activities. At the completion of this project, staff responsible for textbook activities will revert to their original posts in the MOE.

MOE directorates at the governorate level will have the responsibility for arranging for delivery of textbooks from governorates to schools.

Procurement of Goods: Goods procured under this project will include: printing of textbooks, office furniture, equipment and supplies needed for the project implementation. The procurement will be done using the Bank’s Standard Bidding Document (SBD) for all International Competitive Bidding (mainly for printing textbooks) and National SBD satisfactory to the Bank. Shopping will also be used.

Selection of Consultants: Consultants’ services procured under this project will include: selection of a procurement management firm to assist the PMT in procurement related issues, provide training of the MOE procurement staff and undertake physical spot checks; and selection of individual consultants and/or firms to provide training and capacity building in financial management.

Operating Costs: The grant will finance expenditures directly related to the management of the project such as: (i) maintenance of office equipment; (ii) transportation and travel, including per diem allowances for Project staff in travel status; (iii) rental of office space; (iv) office supplies, utilities and office administration, including translation, printing and advertising; (v) fuel costs; (vi) communication costs; (vii) costs for production of bidding documents; (viii) commercial bank charges; and (ix) any other Project management support costs as agreed by the MOE and the Bank, but excluding salaries of the MOE’s civil servants. These items which will be financed by the project will be procured using the MOE administrative procedures which are satisfactory to the Bank.

A General Procurement Notice was published in DgMarket on March 24, 2004 (revised on April 29, 2004), and in UN Development Business on March 26, 2004 (revised on April 30, 2004).

All activities of selection prior to contract signing could be accomplished using advanced procurement, with signing and initial payments made as soon as the grant agreement is signed.

Payments to printers and contractors in this project will be made by direct payment.

Coordination with other donors will build on the collaboration already under way, and strengthened by the MOE-initiated meeting with agencies in Amman in November 2003. In-country coordination is presently conducted through an Education Sector Coordination Forum chaired by MOE. There is also a UN-chaired Education Coordination Forum in Amman which brings together UN agencies, donors and NGOs working in Amman. The Bank remains in close and regular contact with the UN Coordinator for the Education and Culture Cluster, and will continue to work closely with other partners and donors to ensure ongoing coordination and sharing of experience.

8. Sustainability.

The project will cover replacement of approximately 50% of textbooks for 2004/2005 school year.

9. Lessons learned from past operations in the country/sector.

Based on the World Bank's recent experience in post-conflict countries such as East Timor, Bosnia, Algeria, Sierra Leone and Kosovo, a number of lessons have been introduced into the design of the project. First, experience has shown the value of early and visible impact, and the importance of resumption of normal schooling operations to permit the education authorities to focus energy on wider system reform. This project targets that issue directly. A second lesson is the importance of capacity-building in the ministry. This project will be complemented by a range of capacity-building activities in the Capacity Building Project-I. A third lesson is the importance of early and effective collaboration with other development partners coordinated by the government. The project draws upon the extensive collaboration with other development partners that have been active in Iraq, and builds on complementary activities coordinated through the MOE. Finally, because of the particular difficulties of implementation and supervision where security conditions make access to the country very difficult, the project draws on experience gained in other similar circumstances, such as Algeria where appraisal and supervision were undertaken using a combination of local staff and consultants, and meetings in other countries. The Bank has initiated a series of conference calls leading to a workshop in Amman that will focus on lessons from experience in rehabilitation and textbooks from UNICEF, UNESCO and other agencies that have worked in the field.

10. Project Benefits

Textbooks are a critical factor in facilitating learning. The timely delivery of textbooks will have a direct effect on the quality of teaching and learning. Visible improvement in conditions of learning can have a critical role in building confidence in the new MOP, and in promoting stability.

11. Project Risks

The project is operating in a high risk environment and is likely to be completed before the World Bank staff is able to travel to and within Iraq. For this reason the project has been kept very simple and straightforward. The security situation poses the most significant risk for printing and distribution of textbooks. Mitigation measures include rapid implementation using a combination of local and international suppliers. Fiduciary risks are also high, and will be mitigated through the use of qualified staff in the PMT, financial management and procurement management consultants working in Iraq to provide support and build capacity within the MOE. Should security conditions prevent access by Bank staff, supervision will be undertaken by independent consultants on behalf of the Bank.

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