## BASIC INFORMATION

### A. Basic Project Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Project ID</th>
<th>Project Name</th>
<th>Parent Project ID (if any)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Djibouti</td>
<td>P166059</td>
<td>Expanding Opportunities for Learning</td>
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<td>MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA</td>
<td>01-May-2019</td>
<td>13-Jun-2019</td>
<td>Education</td>
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<th>Borrower(s)</th>
<th>Implementing Agency</th>
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<td>Republic of Djibouti</td>
<td>Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (Ministere de l'Education Nationale et de la Formation)</td>
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**Proposed Development Objective(s)**

The project development objective is to increase equitable access to basic education, improve teaching practices, and strengthen MENFOP’s management capacity.

### Components

- **Component 1:** Establishing foundations for quality preschool education
- **Component 2:** Expanding access to and improving retention in primary and lower secondary education
- **Component 3:** Building capacity to support teaching and learning
- **Component 4:** Strengthening MENFOP's management capacity and data systems

## PROJECT FINANCING DATA (US$, Millions)

### SUMMARY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
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<td>of which IBRD/IDA</td>
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<td>Financing Gap</td>
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### DETAILS

**World Bank Group Financing**
B. Introduction and Context

Country Context

1. Djibouti is a lower-middle income economy with a Gross Domestic Product (GDP) equivalent to US$1.76 billion in 2016. It has experienced impressive economic growth in recent years, mainly spurred by capital intensive activities in port and transport services. It is also experiencing significant growth of its services in banking, logistics, and tourism. GDP real growth averaged 8 percent between 2013–2016, surpassing growth in comparable countries. However, this recent growth spell has had a limited effect on eradicating poverty in the country as inequality remains relatively high. Djibouti’s Gini coefficient stood at 44.1 in 2013. Despite relatively high per capita income of US$1,862 (2015), 30 percent of the population lives in poverty and 21 percent lives in extreme poverty according to the household survey (EDAM4). The same survey also found that: (a) 36 percent of Djibouti’s population is under 14 years old and 51 percent under 24, (b) its human development indicators indicate a life expectancy of 62 years old and an infant mortality at birth rate to be 54/1,000, and (c) an adult literacy rate of only 53 percent.

2. With less than one percent of all land being arable and average annual rainfall of 0.8 inches, Djibouti has almost no natural resources. It relies instead on its geo-strategic location: its ports serve as an economic gateway to Ethiopia and the region and its military bases provide allies with access to the Gulf and East Africa. Djibouti’s population, estimated at approximately one million, is concentrated in and around Djibouti-Ville, where an estimated 75 percent of the population lives.
3. The national unemployment rate in Djibouti stands at 47 percent for people aged 15 and older. There are significant variations in unemployment rates across gender, region and age: men’s unemployment average is 38 percent while women’s is 63 percent. While Djibouti-Ville has an average unemployment rate of 48 percent, the combined average unemployment rate for the other five regions of Djibouti is 44 percent. Unemployment rate for those aged 15-24 stands at 11.76 percent. Employment rates and education levels show a slight positive correlation in Djibouti but attaining higher levels of education does not guarantee more opportunities in the labor market. Individuals with a secondary education or more show higher employment rates than those with no education. However, the differences in employment between those with no education and individuals that only attain primary education are not always substantial, likely due to issues with quality of service delivery.

4. To address these issues in the context of a national strategy, Djibouti has developed a development strategy (Vision 2035) based on five key pillars that aim to (a) strengthen unity, peace and solidarity, (b) reinforce good governance and democracy, (c) promote competitive and healthy economic growth, (d) invest in human capital, and (e) increase trade and commerce with regional partners. A key underlying principle of Vision 2035 is the inclusion of all Djiboutians.

5. The country hosts 29,214 refugees and asylum-seekers (as of February 2019) as well as a significant population of economic migrants and pastoral nomads (for which population estimates vary), according to the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) records. There are four groups: Somalis (43%), Yemenis (16%), Ethiopians (36%) and Eritreans (3%). Somalis from South and central Somalia and Yemenis receive prima facie refugee status, while Somalis from Somaliland, Puntland, Ethiopians and Eritreans become asylum-seekers. There are refugee camps (called villages) that host 80 percent of the refugee population: two for Somalis in the south of the country and one in the north for Yemenis. Many refugees make their way to Djibouti Ville where because of their dispersal into the general population, numbers are less easy to estimate. The refugee population, which had grown significantly between 2015-2018, has stabilized to some extent. Conscious of its responsibility to these populations, the government is working in a coordinated manner to address their needs with support from the international community.

6. Djibouti has demonstrated its openness and commitment to providing adequate protection to refugees over the last forty years, but the management of this situation is constrained by challenging economic and political concerns. In terms of legal and institutional framework, Djibouti is party to several international conventions and has enacted national laws related to addressing refugee issues. The WBG in consultation with UNHCR has confirmed that Djibouti’s protection framework is adequate for the purposes of the refugee sub-window (RSW).

7. In line with the approach of the Global Compact on Refugees, the government has committed to a number of new progressive reforms, the key elements of which highlight three priority areas for action, including: institutional and legislative strengthening; improving access to basic services, particularly education and health; promoting social protection and economic prosperity. To this end, it has put into place a multisectoral committee under the Minister of Finance and Economy that collaborates closely with the UNHCR, the World Bank, UNICEF, and the EU. In 2017, a new National Refugee Law came into force and decrees were enacted that ensure the integration of refugees into national systems such as health,
education and the labor market. Progress is being made on several fronts, in line with the Global Compact, including:

- Since January 2018, refugees have been integrated into the national health system through an agreement between the Ministry of Health and the UNHCR. They have access to all medical facilities in the country, like Djiboutian nationals.
- In 2018, 7198 identity papers were issued to refugees and 7307 certificates to asylum-seekers. 15,071 refugees gained the right to work and so had access to the Labor market.
- Refugees may also open bank accounts and request credit. The refugee card acts as a residence permit and a work permit. They are free to engage in independent activity or salaried work and thus have access to self-sufficiency.
- Other sustainable solutions offered include voluntary return to countries of origin when the situation permits. In 2016/17, 538 refugees were voluntarily repatriated (and 138 in 2018).

8. Djibouti also ratified the Djibouti Declaration on the Rights of Education on December 14th, 2017, which is discussed in the next section.

9. Finally, in conjunction with this Project, three other Bank projects that benefit from the RSW, support the Government in these efforts: in urban development (Djibouti Integrated Slum Upgrading Project (P162901), health (DJ Improving Health Sector Performance AF - (P131194) and social protection (Integrated Cash Transfer and Human Capital Project (P166220). Together these projects will provide significant complementary assistance to refugees.

Sectoral and Institutional Context

10. **Over the past two decades, the government has placed education at the center of its development policies, with education reforms focusing on improving quality, access and relevance.** Djibouti’s public education system is free and is composed of three levels: basic education, secondary education and tertiary education. Basic education includes preschool, primary and lower secondary education. In principle, there are two years of preschool, five years of primary school and four years of lower secondary school. Only primary and lower secondary schools are compulsory while pre-primary remains voluntary, and as a result, underdeveloped. At the secondary level, students can follow two tracks: the general track consisting of three years and ending with students sitting for their national baccalaureate exam, and the technical and vocational track, with a duration of one, two or three years depending on the area of specialty.

11. **There are 54 public and private preprimary schools serving 4,388 students. 187 primary schools, of which 141 are public and 38 are private, serve 66,508 students.** 67 lower middle secondary schools, of which 39 are public and 25 are private serve 40,857 students. In terms of teachers, 38 serve in public preschools, 1,125 in public primary school and 1,112 in public lower secondary schools. At the primary school level, 19 percent of teachers have at least completed their lower secondary cycle, 39 percent their baccalaureate, 8 percent a university degree while 32 percent haven’t declared their educational background. As for refugees, there are three refugee preschools that serve a total of 686 students and three primary refugee schools and five accelerated learning centers that serve 3,529 students. At the lower middle secondary level, there are 743 refugee students enrolled in three schools.
12. **Access to education at all levels continues to be one of the country’s major challenges.** The gross enrollment rate stands at only 14 percent for pre-primary, 89 percent for primary and 63 percent for lower secondary, according to the Ministry of National Education and Professional Training (MENFOP). Findings from the latest household survey in 2018 suggests updated figures for Net Enrollment Rates (NER) for primary: 74 percent nationally, 79 percent for Djibouti-Ville, and in the regions, the rate ranges from 60.6 percent in Arta to 74.6 percent in Ali-Sabieh. Within Djibouti-Ville, NER for primary varies considerably by arrondissement, with arrondissement 2 (in Boulao) and arrondissements 4 and 5 (in Balbala) being weakest.

13. **Enrollment in preschool has witnessed slight growth in the past five years but remains low.** The preschool sub-sector is nascent and is currently being provided through public schools (for five-year olds), community and private preschools. As of the 2017-2018 school year, MENFOP reported 42 private and 12 public preschools in operation, with the majority of public classrooms located in the interior regions and serving 585 students overall. MENFOP is taking a gradual approach to expansion of public preschool education. The private sector is mostly concentrated in Djibouti-Ville and serves 2,440 students. There are 26 community preschools: 14 in Djibouti-Ville and 12 in the regions, serving a total of 677 students. These community preschools fall under the Ministry of Women and Family (MFF) and target mostly children under four.

14. **The quality of preschool education is one of the major factors that hinder school readiness.** A test administered to a sample of 733 students in the first grade across all five regions of Djibouti and Djibouti-Ville in 2018 pointed to weak school readiness, even for those students who had attended preschool. Among those who had attended preschool, only four percent were able to complete the task correctly, while none of those who hadn’t attended preschool were able to achieve a perfect score. Because the language of instruction in schools is French and only 23 percent of students speak French at home, the existing preschool curriculum would benefit from efforts to appropriately integrate French language exposure and instruction.

15. **To increase access to primary education, MENFOP has resorted to large class sizes and double-shifting.** The teacher/student ratio at the primary school level is 1:39 nationally, though the ratio of students to pedagogical division (or classroom) is 1:38. The latter varies between the regions with Djibouti-Ville having the highest average class size of 1:44. Due to the lack of physical classrooms, double-shifting is widespread, with the most prevalent use being in Djibouti-Ville where 43 percent of classes operate in double shifts.

16. **Vulnerable populations, including refugees, girls, special needs children and students out of school are disadvantaged in terms of access to education.**

17. **In regard to refugee education, on December 14, 2017, the Government of Djibouti (GoD) signed the “Djibouti Declaration on the Education of Refugees in IGAD Member States” affirming its responsibility for the education of all school-age children within its borders.** In line with this, MENFOP is currently taking over the operation of all camp schools (which had been run by UNHCR, Lutheran World Services and other NGOs) and is working to develop long-term sustainable education services for refugee children in Djibouti. MENFOP has developed a roadmap for this transition and a committee, presided over by the Minister, follows up on progress. In the southern camps, where Somalis had been following a Kenyan curriculum in English, MENFOP is transitioning to the Djiboutian curriculum in English (under development). In the north, Yemeni students can follow the Djibouti curriculum which exists in Arabic (that is in use in Djiboutian
Arabic-language schools). On January 15, 2019, the Minister opened a new Arabic-speaking public school in Markazi destined to address Yemeni students’ needs. Teacher training for these schools was carried out in 2018/19. The recognition of former education as well as the need for identification to enroll in schools is being addressed. Since 2017/18, pertinent refugee-related data are included in MENFOP’s yearly educational statistical tables. In terms of enrolment, the latest out of school children survey (OOSC 2019), suggests that 42 percent of 6-10-year-old refugees and 40 percent of 11-14-year-old refugees are enrolled in schools nationally. In rural regions that host over 80 percent of refugees, the same survey suggests that 44 percent of 6-10 year olds and 38.7 percent of 11-14 year olds are out of school. The five most commonly cited reasons given by refugee families for their child being out of school are: the need to help the family at home (28 percent); ‘too young’ (18 percent); no school canteen (11 percent); ‘not interested’ (9 percent); or, the ‘level of schooling has already been attained (8 percent). A study of the educational needs of school-age refugee children, their families, and the host communities, as well as the needs of their teachers is currently underway and will inform project interventions. It places emphasis on findings disaggregated by gender. The World Bank has been working and continues to work in close coordination with MENFOP, UNHCR, and ONARS on these issues. As development partners, part of the local education partner group, they were given the opportunity to review and comment on this PAD.

18. **Girls’ enrollment is lower at all education levels.** Girls make up 49 percent of pre-school, 46 percent of primary and 45 percent of lower secondary school students. Even though girls’ repetition rates are lower at primary and that their primary school national examination scores are slightly better than boys’, girls experience higher dropout rates in fifth grade, which partially accounts for the disparities in enrollment in lower secondary. According to the initial results of OOSC 2019, the average percentage of out-of-school girls in lower secondary is 18 percent while it stands at 13 percent for boys. In the first year of lower secondary, the percentage for out of school girls stands at 15 percent (compared to 9 percent for boys) and increases to reach 21 percent in the last year of lower secondary (compared to 15 percent for boys). The lower enrollment rates for girls in lower secondary are especially prevalent in rural areas. Indeed, the average percentage of out-of-school girls in lower secondary is 47 percent while it stands at 31 percent for boys. The top two reasons listed for the non-schooling of girls according to the study are: (a) their lack of interest; (b) their gender. Therefore, renewed and targeted efforts need to be undertaken to reach gender parity especially in lower secondary.

19. **MENFOP is also committed to accommodating special needs students at school.** However, this requires additional financial, human and technical capabilities, currently lacking at MENFOP. Stigma continues to be attached to various disabilities in Djibouti. To address this, MENFOP has set up an Office for Special Needs, has a basic strategy, and classes for visually- and hearing-impaired at the primary level. In 2017-18, the first cohort of hearing-impaired students graduated from a specialized TVET program. MENFOP has set targets in their Education Sector Plan (Plan d’Action de l’Education – PAE) 2017-20 of enrolling 600 students in the next three years, which presents significant challenges due to the overall constraints within MENFOP. However, there does not exist a costed plan that would allow for a harmonized approach and mobilize the necessary resources to ensure sustainability.

20. **At least one out of five school age students have never been to school.** Data vary for numbers of out of school children: while UNESCO UIS puts the number at 41,062 (2018), and Djibouti’s national statistical institute (DISED) puts it at 32,750, the latest EDAM4 household survey suggests that approximately 20,880 children from 6-14 years old are out of school, which represents 19 percent nationally, though this figure is
higher than 30 percent in four regions. These regional disparities suggest that there may be some correlation between access to services and the percentage of children out of the school system. According to the survey, the main reasons cited by parents for not schooling their children are ‘lack of interest’, age (‘children are too young’), opportunity costs (‘children need to work’), access, quality of education and lack of necessary documentation (birth certificates, etc.).

21. **MENFOP have outlined three priority actions to improve access: reduce class sizes, eliminate double shifting, and achieve universal primary education.** Targets are given in the PAE 2017-20 for the number of new classes needed by year but often the resources allocated in the national budget are not adequate. School expansion plans are usually for the immediate short term, for the next school year or two, and become possible only when funding is identified. Longer term planning that can provide various hypothetical planning scenarios (depending on MENFOP’s choice of priority or priorities to be addressed), is not available. The procedure for selecting sites depends on location: in the city and especially in high density areas like Balbala, MENFOP works with the Ministry of Habitat to select sites, while in rural areas, sites are chosen in response to community needs or to those expressed by the prefecture. A national school mapping exists, but it is not tied to a geographic information system that can be used for planning. School construction is sometimes constrained by limitations in the size of the construction sector, the need to import all materials, and the high turnover of engineers to oversee construction.

22. **Food insecurity in Djibouti affects about 20 percent of the capital’s population and three-quarters of rural households, hitting poor households and pastoralists especially hard.** This leads to chronic malnutrition in 30 percent of children aged 6-59 months and, with other factors, to stunting. Among other programs, the World Food Program (WFP) provides school meals in targeted rural community preschools, primary and middle schools combining WFP internationally-purchased commodities and fresh food purchased locally with complementary funds allocated by the GoD. A take-home ration of oil is provided to families of school girls as an incentive to keep them in school through the ninth grade. WFP is supporting the capacity of the GoD towards the establishment of a sustainable national school feeding program. Currently, 62 percent of public primary schools have canteens (urban: 18 percent; rural: 95 percent), while only 44 percent of public middle schools do (urban: 22 percent; rural: 92 percent).

23. **As for the quality of education, several national and international quality indicators show that it remains quite low.** At the end of the second year (first cycle) and fifth year (second cycle) of primary school, students sit for the *Objectifs Terminaux d'Intégration* (OTI) exams. To transition to lower secondary, students must pass their fifth year OTIs. Twenty-seven percent of students repeat grade five. Similarly, at the end of the lower secondary school, ninth graders sit for the basic education certificate exam (*brevet de l'enseignement fondamental* - BEF). Grade nine has a high repetition rate of 29.9 percent. These examinations represent structural barriers to progression in the educational system, which is also constrained by the capacity at lower secondary and secondary schools. A 2015 analysis of the grade 9 end of cycle *brevet* exam results showed that there was a large disparity in success rates between public and private schools with public schools achieving a 58 percent success rate compared to 79 percent for private schools. The overall lower secondary level repetition rates are higher for male students than female students. Drop-out rates rose sharply from 3.7 percent to 7 percent between 2013 and 2015 and are higher for female students. In terms of learning outcomes, the 2018 Early Grade Mathematics Assessment (EGMA) test results showed that on average, grade two students were only able to solve 1 out of 6 mathematics
problems, and almost 60 percent had zero scores. Although they represent slight improvements over the 2017 EGMA scores, weak performance in mathematics remains a major concern.

24. **Assessment systems are not fully utilized for learning and policy decision-making and need to be redesigned to capture student performance against learning standards.** Fifth grade OTI results are managed at the national level while the second-grade results are managed at the school level. Currently, only basic analysis is conducted for the fifth grade OTI and BEF exam results. Strengthened MENFOP capacity to analyze and use assessment data would optimize the feedback systems to inform teaching practices.

25. **A process of curriculum modernization has begun.** The existing curriculum was last updated in 2006, and revision is currently underway. The revision aims to make appropriate adjustments, additions and improvements to introduce innovative pedagogical practices, focus on mathematics, languages and science, integrate ICT into curricula, and develop digital skills and 21st century skills. Revisions have been commenced and work related to materials development, trialing and production will begin in September 2019.

26. **The vision of MENFOP’s ICT strategy is to enhance the quality of teaching and learning and to significantly improve students’ performance.** As part of the ICT strategy, the President initiated the "One Child, One Tablet" project which aims to generalize the use of tablets in classrooms starting in first grade. At this stage, coverage has reached grades one, two, three and four. Free applications, programs by subject matter and interactive content have been developed and come with the tablets. A teacher training module on the usage of tablets has also been developed. Furthermore, while ICT education will only be introduced into basic education with the curriculum revisions that are currently underway, MENFOP has already incorporated the study of ICT into the high school curriculum starting in 2013. It also instituted the use of “smart classrooms”, which are now present in 10 high schools and in the largest technical high school; and a training module has been developed for teachers on their use. In terms of internet connectivity, schools in Djibouti-ville are connected through ADSL while the regions use Wimax, a system that piggybacks on existing telephone coverage thereby making it suitable for remote communities. Additionally, several initiatives have been launched to equip schools with high speed internet, multimedia rooms and digital manuals and textbooks. Nevertheless, regular internet and electricity access remains a challenge, and the effectiveness of using tablets in schools has not been evaluated but anecdotal evidence suggests that effective use of ICT tools varies greatly.

27. **The teacher professional development system is highly centralized and has limited impact on teacher practices.** There are 85 primary school pedagogical advisors and 13 inspectors. Pedagogical advisors (PAs) are former teachers who pass a national examination to assume their new role. Their main responsibilities include conducting classroom visits and giving feedback to individual teachers. Inspectors conduct two formal classroom observations a year to evaluate a teacher’s performance. In terms of teachers’ professional development, the Centre de Formation des Enseignants de l’Enseignement Fondamental (CFEEF) is the training center in Djibouti-Ville in charge of delivering the initial training for basic education and secondary school teachers. Based on the needs identified by the inspectors and the pedagogical advisors during their field visits, CFEEF also delivers specific modules for the ongoing training (formation continue) of teachers. These ongoing trainings take place 3-4 times a year during the school holidays and are conducted mostly by training inspectors or consultants at CFEEF. The current centralized in-service
teacher training approach is burdensome to many teachers from the regions and MENFOP is looking to increase access to professional development opportunities at the regional and school levels. Furthermore, best practice suggests that frequent on-site observations and feedback along with opportunities for practice are essential for teachers to improve. MENFOP does not yet have a system in place to record and track professional development activities of its teachers, which limits inspectors’ and PAs’ ability to follow up and observe impact in the classroom.

28. **School leadership is evolving but requires support.** MENFOP has taken concrete actions to strengthen the role of the school leader. A decision to move to merit-based recruitment and selection of school leaders was taken in January 2019. All school leaders must successfully pass the “Certificat d’Aptitude de Formation de Maître d’Application - CAFMA), a diploma demonstrating competence in pedagogical support (that all PAs must possess), thereby reinforcing the school director’s ability to offer support to their teaching team in school in coordination with the PAs and Inspectors. In the Access to Education Quality Project (PAEQ P145323; 2014-2018), school leaders were trained in school management, community relations, pedagogy, and finance, and 60 percent of school directors implemented at least three management practices in which they had received project-supported training. School leaders have also received training on improving school climate. A number of school leaders have also had experience in developing school improvement plans and managing school grants. These efforts have been fragmented and the impact of these interventions on improving school performance is unclear.

29. **Data collection tools are slow, unreliable and need improvement.** Even though school directors collect data digitally through the OPAD application (outil de pilotage d’aide à la decision - decision support tool), the MENFOP statistics office still has to manually enter this data into its system because of data system incompatibility to ensure the accuracy of the information provided. As a result, the statistical yearbook is published with an average delay of seven months. The planning committee uses the ED-ASSIST software to automatically generate the school statistics report. This tool doesn’t currently include features such as multi-year databases and the geographic information system. Without reliable and timely data, MENFOP’s has limited ability to utilize data for decision-making and resource allocation.

30. **Education budget allocations are mostly used to cover recurrent salary expenditures, crowding out capital expenditures on infrastructure, professional development and education innovation.** In 2018, the education budget stood at US$130 million, of which 45.1 percent was allotted to primary education (grades 1-6). Education spending represented 19 percent of the national budget. In 2016, investment spending as a percentage of the total national investment spending stood at 6 percent while recurrent education spending as a percentage of overall recurrent national spending stood at 17.3 percent. Salaries, transfers and subsidies accounted for 93.4 percent of recurrent education expenditures in 2016.

31. **The project is designed to support the government in addressing major challenges in basic education by directing resources towards key areas that can have a transformative impact.** The project interventions will focus on expanding access to quality basic education especially for vulnerable populations, improving retention, reinforcing learning assessments and teachers’ skills, and strengthening sector management capacity and data systems. Based on the principle that real improvement in education quality can only come from within the school, the project will aim to empower school leaders and instructional staff to work collaboratively to raise student achievement and other dimensions of school quality. This change is expected to result from a set of activities, including the establishment of competency frameworks for
teachers, school directors, pedagogical advisors, teacher trainers and inspectors along with an observation mechanism and the provision of effective and relevant professional development programs for each function. The establishment of a reliable and robust student assessment system for the purposes of monitoring learning against specific standards and the identification and remediation of low performing schools and at-risk students is expected, in the long term, to lead to gains in efficiency and effectiveness. The project will also help accelerate the government’s efforts to exploit the use of digital tools throughout the education system (for professional development, classroom instruction, and for monitoring and reporting).

32. **The project will also incentivize a gradual shift from financing of inputs to financing based on results.** Using Disbursement-linked indicators (DLI) will help shift the policy dialogue toward results, especially in the initial years as they will be used to institutionalize a culture of measurement and utilization of results.

### C. Proposed Development Objective(s)

**Development Objective(s) (From PAD)**

33. The project development objective is to increase equitable access to basic education, improve teaching practices, and strengthen MENFOP’s management capacity.

**Key Results**

34. The PDO-level results indicators are as follows:

   a. Additional primary school-level OOSC enrolled, disaggregated by vulnerable populations (girls, refugees, rural students, and special needs students);
   b. Gender parity index in lower secondary enrollment (disaggregated by urban/rural);
   c. Percentage of basic education teachers demonstrating improved skills, disaggregated by primary and preschool;
   d. Learning assessments are revised and administered

### D. Project Description

**Component 1. Establishing foundations for quality preschool education (US$3 million; IPF: US$1.5 million; DLI: US$1.5 million)**

35. The main objectives of this component are to establish quality standards for preschool education and to improve preschool classroom pedagogy through the following activities: (a) revising the preschool curriculum and associated teaching and learning materials, and (b) strengthening preschool teacher capacity to implement a play-based approach\(^1\) to learning.

**Sub-component 1.1: Establishing foundations for preschool**

\(^{1}\) Play-based learning is shown to encourage the development of language and pre-literacy skills, mathematical skills, social and emotional skills, and creativity and imagination.
36. The project will directly finance expenditures related to establishing quality standards, improving preschool classroom pedagogy, and expanding access to preschool.

37. The following activities will be financed using an investment financing approach, including consulting services, goods, and works:
   a. The development of a preschool quality framework with standards for key dimensions of operation of preschool establishments, which may include but are not limited to characteristics such as staff qualifications and training, group size, child: staff ratios, health and safety, environmental requirements, curriculum, parental participation, child protection, quality assurance and inspection, and reporting and accountability. The standards will be developed using a participatory approach including the private sector, NGOs, and the MFF.
   b. The development of a quality assurance mechanism to ensure compliance against standards and to drive improvements in quality, which would include training of preschool assessors.
   c. Reform of the preschool curriculum towards a play-based approach to learning and integration of life skills, and the production and/or purchase of associated teaching and learning materials. The preschool curriculum reform will promote good practice on introduction of French language skills to prepare students for successful transition to primary school. The new curriculum will also integrate environmental education and a focus on sustainability through age-appropriate content and activities.
   d. The development of a new preschool teacher competency framework that defines what preschool teachers are expected to know and be able to do. This competency framework will serve as the basis upon which the pre-service and in-service programs will be designed.
   e. The design of comprehensive training programs / modules for the preparation of new teachers and professional development of existing preschool teachers and the training of trainers. The objectives of the training programs would be to increase capacity to implement the new curriculum through a play-based learning approach. The activity will also support the development of a customized program for community preschool teachers, who have lower levels of formal education and as such will require a differentiated approach. The CFEEF will be responsible for the delivery of the programs.
   f. The adaptation of a preschool classroom observation tool to assess improvements in preschool teacher skills to be utilized by inspectors and/or PAs. The tool will be used as a mechanism to provide feedback and coaching.
   g. A feasibility study to explore possibilities of private-public partnership in ECE service delivery to expand access to preschool beyond public sector provision. This study will assess the suitability of various modalities to the Djiboutian education sectors.

38. The expansion of public preschool classrooms through the construction and/or rehabilitation of classrooms. Forty-one new classrooms in total will be added to the existing 19 through rehabilitation or construction, for a total of 60 preschool classrooms by project end. Preschool classrooms will be connected to existing primary schools where possible. Construction standards and guidance for preschool design, including outdoor space, latrines, and water points, will be developed

Sub-component 1.2 Results-based financing for strengthening preschool quality
39. Using results-based financing, the project will finance eligible expenditures in support of strengthening preschool quality through the carrying out of activities to assess preschools against the approved quality standards and the carrying out of activities to observe and report on preschool teacher classroom performance.

- **DLR 1.1**: The official approval of preschool quality standards through a signed Ministerial memo.
- **DLR 1.2**: The percentage of preschools that meet the approved quality standards (target: 30 percent)
- **DLI 2**: The percentage of public preschool teachers with improved competencies linked to the training as measured by a classroom observation tool (target: 40 percent)

**Component 2. Expanding access to and improving retention in primary and lower secondary education (US$14.75 million; IPF: US$2.5 million; DLI: US$12.25 million)**

40. The main objectives of this component are to expand access to primary and lower secondary education and improve retention of vulnerable populations, including refugees, girls, rural students and special needs students.

**Sub-component 2.1: Expanding access and improving retention in primary and lower secondary education**

41. The project will directly finance select expenditures related to ensuring that all children have access to education and improving retention in primary and lower secondary education. The following activities will be financed using an investment financing approach, including consulting services, goods, and works:

   a. The development of a medium-term school expansion plan, to modernize school infrastructure, and to monitor construction quality.
   b. In order to provide the greatest co-climate benefits and to modernize school infrastructure, a review of current school blueprints will be carried out so that newly constructed schools reflect environmental principles in line with climate change considerations. Climate co-benefits are further discussed in Annex 3.
   c. The rehabilitation of rural primary and lower secondary schools to have adequate facilities including a water point, latrines and an electrical or solar power source.
   d. The operationalization of primary and lower secondary school canteens.
   e. Technical and institutional support for MENFOP (in terms of the translation of the curriculum, the provision of training for teachers of refugee students) in order for the Ministry to assume operation of refugee schools in camps formerly run by NGOs or UNHCR so as to make them part of the national education system in line with the pledge in the Education Action Plan of the Djibouti Declaration.
   f. A situation analysis of inclusive education (students with special needs) and a strategy to respond to needs identified. In addition, an awareness campaign to promote inclusive education will be developed and carried out.
   g. The development of sub-regional plans to promote enrolment and reduce dropout which include locally-identify solutions in collaboration with local communities in all five regions.
These interventions, to be piloted on a trial basis, are expected to benefit vulnerable populations, particularly girls, refugees, special needs and rural students.

Sub-component 2.2. Results based financing for expanding access and improving retention in primary and lower secondary education

42. Using results-based financing, the project will finance eligible expenditures, in support of the expansion of access to schooling to out of school children, and particularly vulnerable groups, and the strengthening of demand and improvement in retention through the carrying out of activities to scale-up successful pilots. It is also expected that increased retention from the scaling of successful pilots will improve the gender parity index in lower secondary; and, finally, through the carrying out of activities that improve sector efficiency (such as improved teaching and remedial instruction in component 3) there is expected to be a reduction in the repetition rate in year 5. Disbursement will be linked to achievement of the following results:

- DLR3.1. A medium-term school expansion plan is approved by MENFOP through a signed Ministerial memo
- DLR3.2. 35,000 primary school-level OOSC enrolled
- DLR4.1. Sub-regional plans to promote enrollment and reduce dropout are approved by MENFOP through a signed Ministerial memo (note de service)
- DLR 4.2. Decrease in grade 5 repetition rate between Year 1 and Year 5 of project implementation
- DLR 4.3. Increase in gender parity index for gross enrollment in lower secondary education

Component 3. Building capacity to support teaching and learning (US$7.75 million; IPF US$ 3.5 million; DLI: US$4.25 million)

43. The main objectives of this intervention are to improve the quality of a) learning assessments, b) professional development, and c) pedagogical resources.

Sub-component 3.1 Improving the quality of learning assessments, professional development, and pedagogical resources

- Learning assessments

44. MENFOP will benefit from strengthened capacity to design, implement, and use learning assessments to monitor student learning and improve pedagogical practices. An improved assessment system will yield more actionable data that can provide feedback to education stakeholders and drive improvements in education processes and outcomes. The project will improve two types of assessments currently administered in the system: a) national learning assessment for monitoring and providing policymakers and practitioners with relevant information on overall performance levels in the system (evaluations indépendantes administered by the service d’évaluation), and b) examinations for making decisions about an individual student’s progress through the education system (OTIs administered by the Direction des Examens). Results of the revised assessment will show the percentage of students reaching learning levels, or benchmarks. Eventually, the national learning assessment will be administered digitally through tablets.
to allow for faster and more accurate data processing and sharing of results. The activity will introduce for the first time an evaluation of digital competencies at primary school for Grade 4 students. This evaluation will serve as a baseline measure that will guide subsequent investments in building relevant digital skills.

45. The following activities will be financed using an investment financing approach, including consulting services and goods:
   a. Development of curriculum-based learning standards, and the development of examinations and independent assessments
   b. Development of training modules for capacity building of key staff working in learning assessment and evaluation, and other selected MENFOP staff in key skills, including but not limited to the design, implementation, analysis, interpretation, and use of learning assessment results. These activities will focus on the following topics: (a) curriculum competencies measured by the assessment, (b) analysis and reporting of assessment results, and (c) developing pedagogical strategies to support students, with a focus on supporting low performers. Training delivery is expected to involve face-to-face sessions, independent self-study activities, and technology-enhanced approaches (training videos, follow-up calls, online resource center, etc.).
   c. The design of tools to share assessment results and information to stakeholders (e.g., parents, teachers, school directors, and inspectors)
   
   • Professional development for improved teaching practices and teacher support

46. To align with the forthcoming curriculum revision, the professional competency standards for teachers, school directors, and pedagogical advisors will be reviewed and updated to align them with the revised curriculum. Professional competency standards for inspectors and other staff may also be updated.

47. The following activities will be financed using an investment financing approach, including consulting services and goods:
   a. Development of competency standards
   b. Establishment of a policy and medium-term plan for professional development for teachers, school principals, and PAs, to reinforce the acquisition of required competencies.
   c. Revision of existing classroom observation tools to align with revised teacher competency standards, and establishment of a database to capture this “baseline” data of existing teacher competencies (supported through component 4) to facilitate teacher management, follow-up and performance evaluation. Participatory consultations will be used to ensure teacher input in the design of the tools. Development of specialized training on use of revised classroom observation tool
   d. Capacity building for the training of trainers and developers on the integration of ICT in teaching and learning
   e. Development of training content and related training materials, including digital content
   f. Support for the creation of teacher professional networks and school director professional communities of practice
   g. Development of professional development for school directors on topics such as: (a) instructional planning, (b) data-driven instruction (working with teachers on re-teaching strategies or differentiated instruction in response to learning assessment data), and (c) classroom observation
and giving feedback to teachers, (d) school self-evaluation; other technical expertise to support capacity building for school leadership

h. Development of a digital resource platform/portal focused on teacher professional development content. This resource portal would: (a) house the electronic versions of the revised materials developed by MENFOP as part of the curriculum revision such as textbooks and teachers’ guides, (b) include best practice examples of lesson plans and classroom observation videos, and (c) links to the self-guided training modules and other professional development resources.

- Improved instructional materials

48. The project will support updating teaching and learning materials (print and digital) to support implementation of the revised curriculum focusing on mathematics, science and technology\(^2\). This will build on support provided under the previous project (ACIGEF) in terms of capacity building for CRIPEN staff on development of e-learning applications. It will also support necessary capacity building for key staff responsible for creating printed and digital instructional materials.

Component 3.2. Results-based financing for improvements in learning assessments and professional development

49. Using results-based financing, the project will finance eligible expenditures (as indicated in Annex 4) in support of improving the quality of assessments, professional development, and instructional materials through the carrying out of activities related to administration of the revised assessments, the carrying out of activities related to dissemination of the school reports, and the carrying out of training of teachers and other staff.

50. Disbursement will be linked to achievement of the following results:
   - DLI5: Improving learning evaluations
   - DLI6: Systematic update of the professional development program (target: 2000 teachers trained)

Component 4. Strengthening MENFOP management capacity and data systems (US$2.55 million; IPF: 2.55 million)

4.1 Modernization of the education management information systems

51. The objective of this subcomponent is to ensure that MENFOP’s data systems are systematically reviewed and modernized. MENFOP’s data management systems need to be updated so that data can be collected, stored, managed, and distributed securely and in a standardized format within a single, integrated data warehouse architecture.

52. TA required. The activity will finance international technical assistance required for the technical assessment and needs analysis of the current data collection system that will provide recommendations for

\(^2\) These are part of MENFOP’s priority subjects – languages were not included given that USAID will focus on early grade reading and language.
the most appropriate technical solutions to the problems identified, including data security and disaster recovery mechanisms. Other key enhancements include:

- The introduction of unique student identifiers with student-level descriptors so that students can be tracked throughout their schooling.
- The creation of an open data portal that will make real time EMIS data available to relevant stakeholders.
- The development of a human resource management sub-portal. This will include all information on teachers and staff, including numbers, deployment to schools, and salaries and benefits. It would also include individualized professional development data with such details as professional development courses, training, certification for teachers, allowing inspectors and PAs to follow up on an individual basis with all staff.

53. **Training.** Relevant MENFOP staff will be trained on the use of this enhanced data system and on use of the available data for decision making purposes. The activities financed will include: (a) training for staff in the directorate of planning and statistics, and the directorate for ICT, and (b) training in data interpretation and use for policy making for select MENFOP staff, including ministry directors and their staff, inspectors, school leaders and their staff.

### 4.2 Support to project management and M&E

54. The objective of this sub-component is to support project management, M&E, and improvements in management in MENFOP. It will finance activities, technical assistance, and recurrent costs related to project management and coordination, including communication, monitoring and evaluation (M&E), and independent verification of attainment of selected DLIs. It will also finance capacity building (training) at the central levels around leadership, management, communications, and planning, to support project implementation. Given that the background of most director generals and managers is in teaching, reinforcement of project management skills will be essential to achieving project objectives and improving overall sector performance.

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<tr>
<th>Legal Operational Policies</th>
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<tr>
<td>Projects on International Waterways OP 7.50</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>Projects in Disputed Areas OP 7.60</td>
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**Summary of Assessment of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts**

The Environmental and social risks of the project are deemed moderate. Project activities will be confined to small civil works interventions (rehabilitation of school classes and construction of school buildings) within the facilities of existing schools or on confined public land. Other Risks/impacts are linked to operational phase of canteens, water points and latrines funded by the project.

**Note:** To view the Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts, please refer to the Appraisal Stage ESRS Document.
E. Implementation

Institutional and Implementation Arrangements

55. The project will be implemented by the MENFOP with the Secretary General serving as the project leaders. Project-financed activities will be mainstreamed within the annual work plans of the relevant departments, which will be responsible for project activities within their mandate. So, for instance, Component 1 concerned with the expansion of pre-primary education will become the responsibility of the General Directorate of Education (the Direction générale de l’enseignement) and the department for pre-primary (the Service de l’enseignement préscolaire). The Director of each department will be responsible for the timely implementation and results of the activities under its responsibility.

56. Fiduciary management and procurement will be overseen by specialized officers in the DGA (service de la gestion des projets) with prior experience managing World Bank projects. The proposed Credit will be implemented in line with World Bank policy IPF with DLIs dated April 2018 including the July 2016 “Procurement Framework”. The MENFOP will be the implementing agency. The Projects Service Unit (PSU) within the Ministry will be handling the FM aspects of the project. The PSU is a department related to the General Directorate of Administration. The Financial Management (FM) assessment conducted during appraisal found the FM risk, as a component of the fiduciary risk, is rated as Substantial. With the proposed mitigating measures detailed in Annex 4, MENFOP will have the financial management requirements as per OP/BP 10.00 and will have an acceptable financial management system and the residual FM risk rating would be moderate.

57. A project Steering Committee will be established to provide overall strategic direction to project implementation and oversight in the context of the overall sector reform program. The steering will coordinate and review implementation progress. The Secretary General will chair the committee meetings which will include all concerned directorates. The DGA will be the focal point responsible for liaising with all the concerned departments and will be responsible for results monitoring and reporting.

58. Two segregated Designated Accounts (DAs) in US Dollars will be opened at a commercial bank in Djibouti acceptable to the World Bank. DA-A will cover category 1 of the project and DA-B will cover category 2 of the project. Payments and withdrawal of eligible expenditures under DA-A will be made based on Statements of Expenditures (SOE) whereas for DA-B, withdrawal applications will be accompanied by IFRs statement, confirmation statement/letter for achievement of DLIs following the applicable procedures and the World Bank’s disbursement arrangements detailed in the Disbursement and Financial Information Letter (DFIL). MENFOP will be responsible for submitting withdrawal applications to claim the funds. The project may benefit from a first instalment paid into the DA-A equal to US$ xxx million. All disbursements will be subject to the terms of the Financing Agreement and to the procedures defined in the DFIL.

59. For some DLIs, an independent verification agent with terms of reference acceptable to the Bank will be recruited to verify the results achieved. For others, the World Bank team will verify achievement subject to World Bank management approval (Practice Manager or Country Director). The verification protocol will be set forth, in detail, in the Project Operation Manual (POM). A Project Operation Manual will be prepared to
guide project implementation. The POM will include a financial management and accounting chapter. The POM will be a condition for effectiveness.

60. The general accounting principles for the project will be as follow: (a) project accounting will cover all sources and uses of project funds, including payments made and expenses incurred. Project accounting will be based on accrual accounting; and (b) project transactions and activities will be separated from other activities undertaken by MENFOP.

61. The project financial reporting will include unaudited Interim Financial Reports (IFRs) and yearly Project Financial Statements (PFS): (a) IFRs should include data on the financial situation of the project. These reports should include: (1) a statement of funding sources and uses for the period covered and a cumulative figure, including a statement of the bank project account balances; (2) a statement of use of funds by component and by expenditure category; (3) a reconciliation statement for the DA; (4) a budget analysis statement indicating forecasts and discrepancies relative to the actual budget; and (5) a comprehensive list of all fixed assets; (b) PSU will produce the IFRs every quarter and submit to the Bank within 45 days at the end of each quarter. The annual PFS should include: (1) a cash flow statement; (2) a closing statement of financial position; (3) a statement of ongoing commitments; (4) analysis of payments and withdrawals from the grant account; and (5) a complete inventory of all fixed assets acquired under the project. (c) IFRs and PFSs will be produced based on the accounting system and submitted for an external financial audit.

62. The PSU will be responsible for preparing periodic reports and maintaining the project bookkeeping and will produce annual Project Financial Statements (PFS) and quarterly Unaudited Interim Financial Reports (IFRs).

63. The project financial statements will be audited annually and will cover all aspects of the project, uses of funds and committed expenditures. The audit will also cover the financial operations, internal control and financial management systems and a comprehensive review of statement of expenditures. The annual audit report will include: (a) the auditor’s opinion on the project’s annual financial statements; (b) a management letter on the project internal controls; and c) a limited yearly review opinion on the IFRs. The annual reports will be submitted to the World Bank within six months from the closure of each fiscal year and the limited review opinion will also be submitted to the World Bank with the IFRs.

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| Country Director:                          | Atou Seck  |
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