

Joint Education Sector Working Group Terms of Reference (Revised)

Introduction

At the Myanmar Development Cooperation Forum (MDCF) held in January 2013, the Government of Myanmar (GoM) and its Development Partners (DPs) agreed to establish Sector Working Groups (SWGs) to ensure effective coordination at the sector/thematic level and promote development effectiveness in Myanmar¹.

These SWGs have been formed in line with the stated priorities of GoM and with the assumption that significant amounts of DP financing can be expected to flow to these particular areas.

For the education sector, a Joint Education Sector Working Group (JESWG) had already been established by the Ministry of Education and its Development Partners, with Terms of Reference agreed in August 2012. The JESWG Meeting held in June 2013 agreed that the JESWG constituted the *de facto* 'Sector Working Group for Education' under the Government's new SWG structure. The JESWG Terms of Reference have accordingly been slightly revised, to bring them into closer alignment with the 'Final Broad Terms of Reference Guidance for Sector Working Groups' issued by the Ministry of National Planning and Economic Development - Foreign and External Relations Department (MoNPED-FERD) in August 2013.

This revised version of the JESWG ToRs retains the content and spirit of the original version, and adds sections on responsibilities, reporting requirements, and other supporting detail in line with FERD guidelines.

Objective

The JESWG will aim to ensure that sectoral priorities, priority programmes and 'quick win' initiatives are identified through the Comprehensive Education Sector Review (CESR) process, and that Costed Education Sector Plans are elaborated and implemented by the Ministry of Education with DP support. Such support should be provided in a coordinated manner and without imposing undue transaction costs on the Ministry. The JESWG will therefore act as a 'one-stop shop' for coordination in the education sector. The overall framework for the JESWG and Costed Education Sector Plans will be provided by national plans, initially the Framework for Economic and Social Reform (FESR), and subsequently the Five-Year Plans that are agreed to implement the National Comprehensive Development Plan (NCDP).

¹ The initial 15 SWGs identified by GoM are: Education; Cultural Conservation; Agriculture & Rural Development; Environmental Conservation; Employment Opportunities; Electric Power; Health & Water Supply; Communications & Information Technology; Transportation; Social Protection & Disaster Risk Reduction; Public Administration & Reform Process (plus Public Financial Management Sub-Group); Enhancing of Women's Empowerment; Media; Hotels & Tourism; Statistical Quality Development

Purpose

The purpose of the Joint Education Sector Working Group (JESWG) is to promote constructive, high-level dialogue involving multiple stakeholders towards achievement of the Government of Myanmar's annual and medium-term education sector priorities. The JESWG builds linkages, facilitates coordination, strengthen results and promotes mutual accountability in line with aid principles between the Ministry of Education, other related Ministries, and DPs².

During the period of 2012-2014, a core (but not sole) mandate of the JESWG is to provide technical oversight to planning for and implementation of the Comprehensive Education Sector Review (CESR). For issues related to the CESR, the JESWG will be accountable to the CESR Task Force and through it to the CESR Steering Committee.

Beyond 2014, following the completion of Phases 1-3 of the CESR, the JESWG will continue to support the education reform process and implementation of the Costed Education Sector Plans (2014-16; 2016-21, and so on). Issues relating to education in emergencies, and education and peace building may also be covered.

The JESWG will serve as a representative forum for high-level discussion of views and issues raised within other forums, including (but not limited to) the Education DP Coordination Group. The JESWG will additionally support the Government in disseminating information to, seeking additional discussion by, and/or requesting technical inputs from the Education DP Coordination Group, the Education Thematic Working Group, and other bodies.

The JESWG aims to promote open dialogue, with the intention that decisions will generally be reached by consensus. However, final decision-making authority rests with the JESWG Chair, as the Government's lead representative.

Responsibilities

The responsibilities of the JESWG are to:

Kick-Off

- Provide a regular forum for exchanging views on strategic directions related to education sector activities, particularly CESR implementation
- Support the identification of 'quick win' priorities through the CESR process, and mobilise their financing and implementation

On-Going

- Assess progress in implementing the CESR, including development of Costed Education Sector Plans, and delivering on agreed sector results. This should

² In this context, development partner is taken to mean multilateral and bilateral agencies, local and international non-government and civil society organisations, philanthropic and private organisations, and educational institutions.

include the identification of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and risks/threats

- Discuss new projects, programmes, and TA proposed by DPs to encourage their alignment with the CESR and Costed Education Sector Plans, complementarity with existing work, and consistency with conflict-sensitive approaches
- Ensure that the Ministry is aware of all key DP support provided to the sector
- Maintain a list of analytical work needed and review and coordinate studies proposed by DPs, as well as ensuring adequate debriefing to the JESWG and integration of lessons learned once studies have been completed
- Establish and monitor a simple annual action plan for the JESWG outlining its key tasks for the year
- Share details of lead ministries' annual plans and budgets as a basis for discussion of quick wins and DP alignment to national priorities articulated in Costed Education Sector Plans
- Foster linkages with other SWGs and related bodies concerned with education legislation and policy reform to ensure cross-sectoral issues such as WASH, school-health, and child protection, are addressed in the Costed Education Sector Plans
- Ensure that cross-cutting issues, including gender, equity, ethnicity, disability, child protection, peace-building, and other rights-based issues, are mainstreamed into Costed Education Sector Plans and policy
- Ensure two-way dialogue with civil society and other concerned actors during sector reform process

Medium-Term

- Support the Ministry of Education and related Ministries in implementing, financing and monitoring the Costed Education Sector Plans developed initially through the CESR process, including development of a Performance Assessment Framework and Risk Management Matrix, as well as sub-sector strategies and policies
- Take steps to help ensure that Costed Education Sector Plans are integrated into the GoM planning and budgeting cycle
- Take steps to help move towards the alignment of DP support with GOM development priorities and consideration of the use of country institutions and budgetary systems in channelling DP development resources. If identified as appropriate and subject to GOM agreement, to adopt Sector Wide Approaches and budget support where/when feasible, and provide necessary institutional capacity development support
- Help the Ministry of Education and related Ministries establish a nationally-led Capacity Development Plan to support implementation of the Costed Education Sector Plans to which DPs can align their support
- *Additional*

- Discuss issues related to the education sector planning, budgeting, implementation, and review cycle, in accordance with Costed Education Sector Plans, annual operational plans, and medium-term strategies, in order to promote best practice
- Discuss budget-related issues in the context of the Government of Myanmar's annual and medium-term education sector priorities, as part of regular planning and review processes
- Consider whole of government coordination mechanisms in the education sector at national and sub-national levels, and coordination mechanisms including NGOs/CSOs, cease-fire and state level groups, private sector and faith-based organisations
- Promote the alignment and harmonisation of development cooperation in the education sector with the Government of Myanmar's annual and medium-term education sector priorities as articulated in the Costed Education Sector Plans
- Develop and maintain a database of development partner-supported activities in the education sector (current and planned). The database will include: projects and programs; capacity development activities; and information on associated technical missions
- Through the CESR, review status of capacity building and research plans, including provision of technical assistance, and seek to ensure coordination between various plans and partners. If necessary, indicate priorities between conflicting opportunities
- Discuss and review aid effectiveness opportunities in the education sector, including policies, rules and regulations, practice, and coordination mechanisms.
- Discuss and review conflict-sensitive education responses to emergencies, peace building efforts, and regular programming as appropriate

Functionality of JESWG

- To support a rapid and effective support for the CESR, the JESWG will meet every 4-8 weeks, subject to later review of the appropriate frequency of meetings.
- The Lead Agency of the JESWG is the Ministry of Education (MoE).
- MoE and DP Leads will agree on appropriate times and location for SWG meetings.
- JESWG is Chaired by the Deputy Minister of Education, with Director-General, Department of Myanmar Education Research Bureau as alternate, and two Leads from the DPs who will serve as counterparts to the JESWG Chair. UNICEF will serve as one DP Lead throughout the CESR process. The other DP Lead will be the Chair of the Education DP Coordination Group. One DP Lead will be drawn from among multilateral agencies, and the other from among bilateral agencies. The DP Leads will work closely together to support the JESWG as a whole. DPs will confirm the Leads for the JESWG annually at the MDCF.
- Meetings will have a clear agenda, as set by JESWG Chair and DP Leads. JESWG Chair and DP Leads will meet at least two weeks prior to meetings to

review progress on agreed actions and finalise the agenda. JESWG members may propose agenda items. The agenda and any associated papers will be shared at least one week ahead of meetings.

- The minutes of the previous meeting will be reviewed by the JESWG for accuracy and completeness.
- The JESWG Secretariat³ will organise meetings, share documents, keep and circulate minutes, organise translation services, support meeting costs, organise teleconferencing, video- or skype-conferencing, and other associated tasks.
- The JESWG's performance and overall functioning will be reviewed on an annual basis. The TOR may be revisited according to need and ongoing relevancy.

Structure

- Decisions on membership, DP Leads and the creation of sub-groups may be made at the discretion of the JESWG, and confirmed annually at the MDCF. Sub-groups will be guided by and report back to the JESWG.
- The term of DP's membership can be reviewed according to demand, interest, and emerging developments in the sector

Joint Education Sector Working Group (JESWG) Membership

- GoM will be represented by the Ministry of Education at the Minister or Deputy Minister level, with DG of DMERB as alternate.
 - Other relevant Ministries will be nominated by GoM and will participate in the JESWG at an operationally relevant level.
 - DPs who provide technical and/or financial support to the education sector should be invited to become members of the JESWG
 - To seek a balance between inclusivity and keeping the JESWG to a size that ensures operational viability, the JESWG have agreed to a representative membership structure⁴ as follows:
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|---|-----------------|
| • Deputy Minister (Higher Education) | Patron, Chair |
| • DG, Department Myanmar Education Research Bureau | Alternate Chair |
| • 2 DP Representatives | Co-Leads |
| • 1 Representative each from multilateral agencies | Member |
| 1. 1 Representative each from bilateral agencies | Member |
| 2. 2 Representatives from INGOs | Member |
| 3. 2 Representatives from LNGOs | Member |
| • 2 Representatives from other DP groups | Member |
| 4. 1 Representative from DHE | Member |
| 5. 2 Representatives from other related ministries in | |

³ Secretariat ToRs are attached at Annex 1

⁴ 2nd JESWG Meeting Minutes, 19 June 2013

	higher education sector	Member
6.	1 Representative from DBEs	Member
7.	1 Representative from DEPT (DG)	Member
8.	1 Representative from DTVE	Member
9.	1 Representative from FERD	Member
10.	1 Representative from GAD	Member
11.	1 Representative from Budget Department	Member
12.	1 Representative from UAG Office	Member
13.	Deputy Director, DEPT	Secretary

Total: 23

Other Line Ministries:

MoST; MoSWRR; MoAF; MoHT; Mol, MoL

(MoE to add others)

Secretariat

- A Secretariat has been established (see ToRs attached at Annex 1) to support the work of the JESWG, based in the CESR office. The Secretariat is led by the Ministry of Education. Lead DPs will support the Secretariat as outlined in the Secretariat ToRs.

Monitoring and Reporting

- The JESWG will report to the FERD-DPWC by means of a simple one page brief which will be prepared after JESWG Meetings according to the template to be supplied
- As indicated by the template, the report will cover achievements (both on agreed sector results and on the JESWG itself), challenges, lessons learned and any issues that need to be addressed at higher levels or are proposed for exchange with other SWGs
- A more in-depth report will be prepared prior to MDCFs (December) and to the twice-yearly meetings of the GoM-DPG, ie approximately, April and August each year.
- The JESWG will also oversee development of a Performance Assessment Framework to review implementation of the Costed Education Sector Plan. Key review tools will include, but not necessarily be limited to, a Results Matrix, Joint Annual Sector Review, and Risk Management Matrix.