
GRANT NUMBER 0090-CAM(SF)

GRANT AGREEMENT
(Special Operations)
(Enhancing Education Quality Project)

between

KINGDOM OF CAMBODIA

and

ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK

DATED 18 FEBRUARY 2008

GAS:CAM 38559

**GRANT AGREEMENT
(Special Operations)**

GRANT AGREEMENT dated 18 February 2008 between KINGDOM OF CAMBODIA (the "Recipient") and ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK ("ADB").

WHEREAS

(A) the Recipient has applied to ADB for a grant for the purposes of the Project described in Schedule 1 to this Grant Agreement; and

(B) ADB has, on the basis inter alia of the foregoing, also agreed to provide a grant to the Recipient from ADB's Special Funds resources upon the terms and conditions hereinafter set forth;

NOW THEREFORE the parties agree as follows:

ARTICLE I

Grant Regulations; Definitions

Section 1.01. All provisions of the Special Operations Grant Regulations of ADB, dated 7 February 2005 (the "Grant Regulations"), are hereby made applicable to this Grant Agreement with the same force and effect as if they were fully set forth herein.

Section 1.02. The definitions set forth in the Grant Regulations are applicable to this Grant Agreement unless the context requires otherwise. In addition, the following terms have the following meanings:

(a) "Consulting Guidelines" means ADB's "Guidelines on the Use of Consultants by Asian Development Bank and its Borrowers" dated (2007), as amended from time to time;

(b) "Goods" means equipment and materials to be financed out of the proceeds of the Grant; and including related services such as transportation, insurance, installation, commissioning, training, and initial maintenance, but excluding consulting services;

(c) "MoEYS" means the Recipient's Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports or any successor thereto;

(d) "MEF" means the Recipient's Ministry of Economy and Finance or any successor thereto;

(e) "NIE" means the Recipient's National Institute of Education or any successor thereto;

(f) "Procurement Guidelines" means ADB's "Procurement Guidelines" (2007), as amended from time to time;

(g) "Procurement Plan" means the procurement plan for the Project dated October 17, 2007 and agreed between the Recipient and ADB, as updated from time to time in accordance with Procurement Guidelines, Consulting Guidelines, and other arrangements agreed with ADB;

(h) "Project Executing Agency" for the purposes of, and within the meaning of, the Grant Regulations means MoEYS which is responsible for the carrying out of the Project;

(i) "Project facilities" means the facilities and equipment to be provided under the Project;

(j) "Resource Schools" means the upper secondary schools that will be strengthened under the Project so as to provide support to a cluster of lower and upper secondary schools for enhancing education quality;

(k) "Riel" or the sign "KR" means Riel in the currency of the Recipient;

(l) "RTTC" means the Regional Teacher Training Centre;

(m) "TTGS" means the teacher trainee grant scholarships, as more fully described in paragraph 10 of Schedule 4 to this Grant Agreement;

(n) "Steering Committee" means the Steering Committee to be established by the Recipient prior to the Effective Date of this Grant Agreement with the composition and responsibilities described in paragraph 1 of Schedule 4 to this Grant Agreement; and

(o) "TTC" means a teacher training college;

(p) "USSGS" means the upper secondary school grant scholarships, as more fully described in paragraph 11 of Schedule 4 to this Grant Agreement; and

(q) "Works" means construction or civil works to be financed out of the proceeds of the Grant, including services such as drilling or mapping, and project related services that are provided as part of a single responsibility or turnkey contract, but excluding consulting services.

ARTICLE II

The Grant

Section 2.01. ADB agrees to make available to the Recipient from ADB's Special Funds resources on terms and conditions set forth in this Agreement an amount of twenty seven million one hundred thousand dollars (\$27,100,000).

ARTICLE III

Use of Proceeds of the Grant

Section 3.01. The Recipient shall cause the proceeds of the Grant to be applied to the financing of expenditures on the Project in accordance with the provisions of this Grant Agreement.

Section 3.02. The goods and services and other items of expenditure to be financed out of the proceeds of the Grant and the allocation of amounts of the Grant among different categories of such goods and services and other items of expenditure shall be in accordance with the provisions of Schedule 2 to this Grant Agreement, as such Schedule may be amended from time to time by agreement between the Recipient and ADB.

Section 3.03. Except as ADB may otherwise agree, all goods and services to be financed out of the proceeds of the Grant shall be procured in accordance with the provisions of Schedule 3 to this Grant Agreement.

Section 3.04. Withdrawals from the Grant Account in respect of goods and services shall be made only on account of expenditures relating to:

- (a) goods which are produced in and supplied from and services which are supplied from such member countries of ADB as shall have been specified by ADB from time to time as eligible sources for procurement, and
- (b) goods and services which meet such other eligibility requirements as shall have been specified by ADB from time to time.

Section 3.05. The Grant Closing Date for the purposes of Section 8.02 of the Grant Regulations shall be 31 October 2014 or such other date as may from time to time be agreed between the Recipient and ADB.

ARTICLE IV

Particular Covenants

Section 4.01. In the carrying out of the Project and operation of the Project facilities, the Recipient shall perform, or cause to be performed, all obligations set forth in Schedule 4 to this Grant Agreement.

Section 4.02. (a) The Recipient shall (i) maintain, or cause to be maintained, separate accounts for the Project; (ii) have such accounts and related financial statements audited annually, in accordance with appropriate auditing standards consistently applied, by independent auditors whose qualifications, experience and terms of reference are acceptable to ADB; (iii) furnish to ADB, as soon as available but in any event not later than 6 months after the end of each related fiscal year, certified copies of such audited accounts and financial statements and the report of the auditors relating thereto (including the auditors' opinion on the use of the Grant proceeds and compliance with the financial covenants of this Grant Agreement as well as on the use of the procedures for imprest account/statement of expenditures), all in the English language; and (iv) furnish to ADB such other information concerning such accounts and financial statements and the audit thereof as ADB shall from time to time reasonably request.

(b) The Recipient shall enable ADB, upon ADB's request, to discuss the Recipient's financial statements for the Project and its financial affairs related to the Project from time to time with the auditors appointed by the Recipient pursuant to Section 4.02(a) hereabove, and shall authorize and require any representative of such auditors to participate in any such discussions requested by ADB, provided that any such discussion shall be conducted only in the presence of an authorized officer of the Recipient unless the Recipient shall otherwise agree.

Section 4.03. The Recipient shall enable ADB's representatives to inspect the Project, the goods financed out of the proceeds of the Grant, and any relevant records and documents.

ARTICLE V

Effectiveness

Section 5.01. The following are specified as additional conditions to the effectiveness of this Grant Agreement for the purposes of Section 9.01(e) of the Grant Regulations:

(a) the Project Steering Committee shall have been established and all of its members shall have been appointed;

(b) the Project management staff shall have been appointed and the technical units shall have been established, to the satisfaction of ADB;

(c) the upper secondary schools to be supported as Resource Schools under the Project and the lower and upper secondary schools falling under their network shall have been identified; and

(d) the Recipient shall have taken a decision and issued the necessary instructions with respect to simplifying procurement of textbooks.

Section 5.02. A date ninety (90) days after the date of this Grant Agreement is specified for the effectiveness of the Grant Agreement for the purposes of Section 9.04 of the Grant Regulations.

ARTICLE VI

Miscellaneous

Section 6.01. The Minister of Economy and Finance of the Recipient is designated as representative of the Recipient for the purposes of Section 11.02 of the Grant Regulations.

Section 6.02. The following addresses are specified for the purposes of Section 11.01 of the Grant Regulations:

For the Recipient

Ministry of Economy and Finance
Royal Government of Cambodia
Phnom Penh, Cambodia

Facsimile Numbers:

(855-23) 428-424
(855-23) 430-224.

For ADB

Asian Development Bank
P.O. Box 789
0980 Manila, Philippines

Cable Address:

ASIANBANK
MANILA

Telex Numbers:

29066 ADB PH (RCA)
42205 ADB PM (ITT)
63587 ADB PN (ETPI)

Facsimile Numbers:

(632) 636-2444
(632) 636-2228 (SESS).

IN WITNESS WHEREOF the parties hereto, acting through their representatives thereunto duly authorized, have caused this Grant Agreement to be signed in their respective names and to be delivered at the principal office of ADB, as of the day and year first above written.

KINGDOM OF CAMBODIA

By 

H. E. KEAT CHHON
Authorized Representative

ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK

By 

HARUHIKO KURODA
President

SCHEDULE 1

Description of the Project

1. The impact of the Project will be an increased number of better educated and skilled people in the territory of the Recipient through strengthening the capacity of institutions and agencies responsible for delivery of quality education.

2. The scope of the Project comprises:

Part A: Education System Management and Development

Strengthening institutional capacity of MoEYS for more efficient management and delivery of education services through:

- (i) dissemination, upon adoption, of the Education Law and Gender Mainstreaming Policy through distribution of printed copies to schools, district and provincial offices, and other relevant stakeholders; conducting a national workshop for senior national and provincial officials of MoEYS and other key ministries to familiarize such officials with the provisions of the Education Law;
- (ii) establishment of policy framework for teacher education and teacher management;
- (iii) strengthening of the NIE;
- (iv) review of the roles and functions of MoEYS at the central, provincial, district and school levels;
- (v) strengthening of the management information systems;
- (vi) establishment of monitoring and quality assurance systems; and
- (vii) enhancement of the capacity of MoEYS' Pedagogic Research Department and the Education Materials Approval Board.

Part B: Professional Development of Teachers

- (i) enhancement of the management capacity of the teacher training institutions;
- (ii) strengthening of the in-service teacher training curriculum and performance monitoring;
- (iii) upgrading of the facilities of the TTCs;
- (iv) expansion of access to teacher training opportunities;
- (v) improvement of skills and competencies of teacher trainers in the TTCs;
- (vi) improvement of teaching skills and competencies of secondary school teachers;
- (vii) upgrading of the competencies of under-qualified secondary school teachers;
- (viii) strengthening of the English language, science and information, communication and technology (ICT) competencies of the upper secondary school teachers; and

- (ix) development of a multi-media modality for teacher education to support the delivery of some training activities through use of interactive computer-based learning materials.

Part C: Strengthening Secondary Education

- (i) development of a secondary education development plan;
- (ii) strengthening of the school networking and school management, and introduction of school improvement planning to help develop and sustain teacher competencies through professional development and mentoring activities;
- (iii) increasing access to secondary education for girls and children from disadvantaged areas through provision of merit-based scholarships;
- (iv) upgrading of school facilities at the Resource Schools, including information and communication technology, laboratories and libraries;
- (v) development of curriculum in priority areas for use in secondary schools;
- (vi) provision of text books and teacher guides to all upper secondary schools; and
- (vii) strengthening of the student achievement assessment in secondary education.

3. The Project also includes provision of consulting services. The Project is expected to be completed by 30 April 2014.

SCHEDULE 2

Allocation and Withdrawal of Grant Proceeds

General

1. The table attached to this Schedule sets forth the Categories of Goods, Works, services and other items to be financed out of the proceeds of the Grant and the allocation of amounts of the Grant to each such Category (hereinafter called the Table). (Reference to "Category" or "Categories" in this Schedule is to a Category or Categories of the Table and reference to "Subcategory" or "Subcategories" in this Schedule is to a Subcategory or Subcategories of a Category.)

Percentages of ADB Financing

2. Except as ADB may otherwise agree, the items of the Categories and Subcategories listed in the Table shall be financed out of the proceeds of the Grant on the basis of the percentages set forth in the Table.

Reallocation

3. Notwithstanding the allocation of Grant proceeds and the withdrawal percentages set forth in the Table,

(a) if the amount of the Grant allocated to any Category appears to be insufficient to finance all agreed expenditures in that Category, ADB may, by notice to the Recipient, (i) reallocate to such Category, to the extent required to meet the estimated shortfall, amounts of the Grant which have been allocated to another Category but, in the opinion of ADB, are not needed to meet other expenditures, and (ii) if such reallocation cannot fully meet the estimated shortfall, reduce the withdrawal percentage applicable to such expenditures in order that further withdrawals under such Category may continue until all expenditures thereunder shall have been made; and

(b) if the amount of the Grant then allocated to any Category appears to exceed all agreed expenditures in that Category, ADB may, by notice to the Recipient, reallocate such excess amount to any other Category.

Disbursement Procedures

4. Except as ADB may otherwise agree, all Goods, Works and consulting services to be financed out of the Grant proceeds shall be disbursed in accordance with ADB's "Loan Disbursement Handbook" dated January 2007 (ADB's Loan Disbursement Handbook), as amended from time to time.

Imprest Account; Statement of Expenditures

5. (a) Except as ADB may otherwise agree, the Recipient shall establish immediately after the Effective Date, an imprest account at the National Bank of Cambodia or a commercial bank acceptable to ADB. The imprest account shall be established, managed, replenished and liquidated in accordance with ADB's Loan Disbursement Handbook and

detailed arrangements agreed upon between the Recipient and ADB. The currency of the imprest account shall be Dollar. The initial amount to be deposited into the imprest account shall not exceed the lower of (i) the estimated expenditure for the first six months of Project implementation, or (ii) the equivalent of ten (10) percent of the Grant amount.

(b) The statement of expenditures (SOE) procedure may be used for reimbursement of eligible expenditures and to liquidate advances provided into the imprest account in accordance with ADB's Loan Disbursement Handbook and detailed arrangements agreed upon between the Recipient and ADB.

TABLE
ALLOCATION AND WITHDRAWAL OF GRANT PROCEEDS
(Enhancing Education Quality Project)

CATEGORY				ADB FINANCING
Number	Item	Amount Allocated		Percentage and Basis for Withdrawal from the Grant Account
		Category	\$ Subcategory	
1	Works	3,077,800		90 percent of total expenditure
2	Equipment and Furniture	3,557,700		
2A	Equipment and Furniture - Imported		2,000,000	100 percent of total expenditure*
2B	Equipment and Furniture - Local		1,557,700	90 percent of total expenditure
3	Learning Center Resources	3,060,000		90 percent of total expenditure
4	Materials	1,346,000		100 percent of total expenditure*
5	Vehicles	253,200		100 percent of total expenditure*
6	Training, Workshops and Technical Activities	7,307,400		90 percent of total expenditure
7	Scholarships	1,220,000		amounts due
8	Project Management	1,137,600		90 percent of total expenditure
9	Consulting Services	4,148,800		100 percent of total expenditure*
10	Unallocated	1,991,500		amounts due
	Total	27,100,000		

* Exclusive of local taxes and duties

SCHEDULE 3

Procurement of Goods and Works, and Consulting Services

General

1. All Goods and Works, and consulting services, to be financed out of the proceeds of the Grant shall be subject to and governed by the Procurement Guidelines, and the Consulting Guidelines, respectively.
2. All terms used and not otherwise defined in this Grant Agreement have the meanings provided in the Procurement Guidelines and/or the Consulting Guidelines, as applicable.

Procurement for Goods and Works

3. Except as ADB may otherwise agree, Goods and Works shall only be procured on the basis of the methods of procurement set forth below:

International Competitive Bidding
National Competitive Bidding
Shopping
Direct Purchase

The methods of procurement are subject to, among other things, the detailed arrangements and threshold values set forth in the Procurement Plan. The Recipient may only modify the methods of procurement or threshold values with the prior agreement of ADB, and modifications must be set out in updates to the Procurement Plan.

4. Domestic Preference. The Recipient may grant a margin of preference in the evaluation of bids under international competitive bidding in accordance with paragraphs 2.55(a) and 2.56 of the Procurement Guidelines for domestically manufactured Goods and paragraphs 2.55(b) and 2.56 of the Procurement Guidelines for domestic Works.

National Competitive Bidding

5. The procedures to be followed for national competitive bidding shall be those set forth for the "National Competitive Bidding" method in the Recipient's Procurement Manual of September 2005 issued under Subdecree No. 14 of 26 February 2007 (Subdecree on Promulgating Standard Operating Procedures for Implementing the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank Assisted Projects) with the clarifications and modifications described in the following paragraphs required for compliance with the provisions of the Procurement Guidelines.

- i. Application

Contract packages subject to National Competitive Bidding procedures will be those identified as such in the project Procurement Plan. Any changes to the mode of procurement from those provided in the Procurement Plan shall be

made through updating of the Procurement Plan, and only with prior approval of ADB.

ii. Eligibility

Bidders shall not be declared ineligible or prohibited from bidding on the basis of barring procedures or sanction lists, except individuals and firms sanctioned by ADB, without prior approval of ADB.

iii. Advertising

Bidding of contracts estimated at \$500,000 or more for Goods or \$1,000,000 or more for Works shall be advertised concurrently with the general procurement notices on ADB's website.

iv. Anticorruption

Definitions of the terms "corrupt practice", "fraudulent practice", "collusive practice" and "coercive practice" shall reflect the harmonized definitions given in the ADB's *Anticorruption Policy* (1998, as amended to date).

v. Rejection of all Bids and Rebidding

Bids shall not be rejected and new bids solicited without ADB's prior concurrence.

vi. Bidding Documents

The bidding documents provided in the Recipient's Procurement Manual shall be used to the extent possible. The first draft English language version of the procurement documents shall be submitted for ADB review and approval, regardless of the estimated contract amount, in accordance with agreed review procedures (post and prior review). The ADB-approved procurement documents will then be used as a model for all procurement financed by ADB for the project, and need not be subjected to further review unless specified in the Procurement Plan.

vii. Member Country Restrictions

Bidders must be nationals of member countries of ADB, and offered Goods and Works must be produced in and supplied from member countries of ADB.

Selection of Consulting Services

6. Quality- and Cost-Based Selection. Except as ADB may otherwise agree, the Recipient shall apply quality- and cost-based selection for selecting and engaging consulting services.

Industrial or Intellectual Property Rights

7. (a) The Recipient shall ensure that all Goods and Works procured (including without limitation all computer hardware, software and systems, whether separately procured or incorporated within other goods and services procured) do not violate or infringe any industrial property or intellectual property right or claim of any third party.

(b) The Recipient shall ensure that all contracts for the procurement of Goods and Works contain appropriate representations, warranties and, if appropriate, indemnities from the contractor or supplier with respect to the matters referred to in subparagraph (a) of this paragraph.

8. The Recipient shall ensure that all ADB-financed contracts with consultants contain appropriate representations, warranties and, if appropriate, indemnities from the consultants to ensure that the consulting services provided do not violate or infringe any industrial property or intellectual property right or claim of any third party.

ADB's Review of Procurement Decisions

9. All contracts procured under international and national competitive bidding and shopping procedures and contracts for consulting services shall be subject to prior review by ADB, unless otherwise agreed between the Recipient and ADB and set forth in the Procurement Plan.

SCHEDULE 4

Execution of Project and Operation of Project Facilities; Financial and Other Matters

A. PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

1. As the Project Executing Agency, MoEYS shall have overall responsibility for Project implementation. The Steering Committee shall provide overall guidance to the Project and monitor its activities and outputs. The Steering Committee shall include representatives from the MoEYS' Departments of Planning, Teacher Training, General Secondary Education and Pedagogical Research, NIE, Ministries of Economy and Finance, Women's Affairs, and Planning, who shall meet at least semi-annually and when needed.

2. The Director General of the Directorate of General Education of MoEYS shall be the Project Director, and shall be assisted by a deputy Project director, at least five staff with expertise in administration, finance, accounting, planning, procurement and monitoring, and about four support staff appointed by MoEYS, who shall be located within the Directorate of General Education. The Project Director shall be a member of the Steering Committee and shall report to it directly.

3. The Recipient shall establish three technical units (TUs) within MoEYS to guide and support implementation of Project specific activities. The implementation of specific activities shall be the responsibility of the MoEYS departments under whose authority the activities fall. The TUs shall include support staff and one representative from each of the relevant departments implementing a Project component, and each TU shall include a member of the MoEYS' Gender Working Group to ensure mainstreaming of gender aspects of different activities. The TUs shall report to the Project Director who shall ensure coordination and supervision of the TUs.

B. FINANCIAL AND OTHER MATTERS

Counterpart Funds

4. The Recipient shall ensure that (i) counterpart funds required during the Project implementation period are provided on time; (ii) annual budgetary appropriation requests are submitted in a timely manner; and (iii) appropriated funds are disbursed promptly when needed for Project implementation purposes.

Textbook Provision

5. The Recipient shall, within one year after the Effective Date, review the current textbook policies and practices with a view to identifying and eliminating any restrictive practices regarding copyrights and publishing processes to ensure provision of quality textbooks in a timely manner.

Anticorruption Measures

6. (a) The Recipient shall comply with, and shall cause MoEYS to comply with ADB's *Anticorruption Policy* (1998, as amended to date). The Recipient (i) acknowledges

ADB's right to investigate, directly or through its agents, any alleged corrupt, fraudulent, collusive or coercive practices relating to the Project; and (ii) agrees to cooperate fully with, and to cause MoEYS to cooperate fully with any such investigation and to extend all necessary assistance, including providing access to all relevant books and records, as may be necessary for the satisfactory completion of any such investigation.

(b) Without limiting the generality of the preceding paragraph, the Recipient shall (a) ensure that MoEYS conducts periodic inspections on the contractors' activities related to fund withdrawals and settlements and (b) ensure and cause MoEYS to ensure that all contracts financed by ADB in connection with the Project include provisions specifying the right of ADB to audit and examine the records and accounts of MoEYS and all contractors, suppliers, consultants and other service providers as they relate to the Project.

(c) In addition to these requirements, to deter corruption and increase transparency, the Recipient shall cause MoEYS to maintain a Project specific web page on its website to disclose information about procurements related to the Project. For each contract, the web page shall include information on, among others, the list of participating bidders, name of the winning bidder, basic details on bidding procedures adopted, amount of contract awarded, and the list of goods/services procured. In addition to the web-based disclosure, stakeholders, which include civil society and non-governmental organizations, shall be provided detailed information on procurement on public notice boards in their respective provinces. The Recipient shall also ensure that criteria and procedure for selection of candidates for scholarships is also similarly posted on the web page and on public notice boards in the respective provinces.

Land Acquisition and Involuntary Resettlement

7. The Recipient, through MoEYS, shall ensure that (i) rehabilitation or construction of new facilities for schools, TTCs and the NIE are carried out within existing campuses or on vacant land owned by the Recipient, free from all encumbrances, habitation, dispute or controversy; and (ii) proposals for civil works include confirmation that no land acquisition or resettlement will be required under the Project. In the event of unforeseen land acquisition or involuntary resettlement, the Recipient shall immediately inform ADB and prepare the necessary planning documents in compliance with ADB's *Involuntary Resettlement Policy* (1995).

Environmental Impact

8. The Recipient, through MoEYS, shall ensure that the site selection, design, construction, replacement work and operation of facilities in schools, TTCs and the NIE are implemented in accordance with the ADB's *Environment Policy* (2002).

Gender and Ethnic Groups Development Plan

9. The Recipient shall cause MoEYS to ensure that the Gender Action Plan prepared for the Project is implemented and monitored in accordance with its terms, related Recipient regulations and ADB's Policy on Gender and Development (1998) in all activities under this Project. In particular, the Recipient shall ensure that the facility needs assessment and any facility upgrading of the TTCs and upper secondary schools incorporate measures

that help to ensure that such facilities are safe and suitable for female staff and students, respectively.

C. SCHOLARSHIP SCHEMES

Teacher Trainee Grant Scholarships

10. The Recipient shall establish, implement and monitor the TTGS in accordance with guidelines agreed between the Recipient and ADB, to provide a total of about 500 annual grants to approximately 100 teacher trainees attending the NIE and approximately 400 teacher trainees attending any one of the RTTCs. Sixty percent (60%) of the scholarships shall be reserved for female teacher trainees from disadvantaged areas over 6 years. The selection criteria for the scholarships shall include the following:

- (i) Eligible students shall come from such areas identified as remote or disadvantaged.
- (ii) Eligible teacher trainees shall have demonstrated good academic record and have completed the NIE/RTTC entrance exam.
- (iii) For the NIE or RTTC, at least sixty percent (60%) of the teacher trainee intake per year, supported by the TTGS scheme, shall be female trainees from remote and disadvantaged areas.
- (iv) Preference shall be given to candidates with disabilities and/or those who belong to ethnic minority groups.
- (v) Renewal of TTGS in RTTCs shall be subject to maintaining a good level of academic performance and daily attendance.

Upper Secondary School Grant Scholarships

11. The Recipient shall establish, implement and monitor the USSGS in accordance with guidelines agreed between the Recipient and ADB, to provide scholarships to poor and disadvantaged students, especially female students. About 4,000 students shall receive scholarships under this scheme. Eligible students shall not be disqualified on the basis of whether their parent(s) are part of the civil service. About sixty percent (60%) of these scholarships shall be reserved for upper secondary female students. The selection criteria for the scholarships include the following:

- (i) Eligible students shall come from such areas identified as remote or disadvantaged.
- (ii) Eligible students shall have demonstrated good lower secondary school academic record and have completed grade 9 examination.
- (iii) For each upper secondary school, at least sixty percent (60%) of the student intake, supported by the USSGS scheme per year, shall be girls from remote and disadvantaged areas.
- (iv) Preference shall be given to candidates with disabilities and/or those who belong to ethnic minority groups.
- (v) Renewal of USSGS shall be subject to maintaining a good level of academic performance and daily attendance.