



1. Project Data:		Date Posted : 08/14/2002	
PROJ ID: P000103		Appraisal	Actual
Project Name: Education Development Project	Project Costs (US\$M)	14.59	22.18
Country: Benin	Loan/Credit (US\$M)	19.3	19.3
Sector(s): Board: ED - Primary education (73%), Central government administration (21%), Secondary education (5%), Vocational training (1%)	Cofinancing (US\$M)		
L/C Number: C2613; CP689			
	Board Approval (FY)		94
Partners involved : Helen Abadzi	Closing Date	02/29/2000	12/30/2001
Prepared by :	Reviewed by :	Group Manager :	Group:
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2. Project Objectives and Components

a. Objectives

Project objectives were to: (a) increase access to primary school, with a specific emphasis on girls ' participation both at primary and secondary levels; (b) improve quality and internal efficiency of primary and secondary education; and (c) improve Ministry of Education capacity for planning and managing the sector' s human and financial resources.

b. Components

To achieve these objectives, the project would: (a) expand primary school rehabilitation and reconstruction by beneficiary communities and implement programs to increase girls ' participation at the primary and secondary levels (US\$6.2 million); (b) improve quality of education (US\$11 million) by (i) developing in-service training for primary school inspectors, pedagogic counselors and school directors, and management training for secondary school heads, and (ii) providing and distributing textbooks and teachers' guides at the primary and lower secondary levels; and (d) strengthen its planning and programming capacity and develop its capacity for financial and human resources management (US\$5.3 million).

c. Comments on Project Cost, Financing and Dates

The project was completed after an extension of 22 months, and almost completely disbursed (US\$300,000 were canceled).

3. Achievement of Relevant Objectives:

Project objectives were largely achieved: The project initially expect to raise the primary gross enrollment rate from 51% in 1993 to the modest target of 59% in 2001. (The enrollment rate was 63% in 1985, but declined.) As enrollments increased beyond earlier expectations, targets were revised upwards. Ultimately, primary school enrollments reached about 83% in the school year 1999/2000. Girls' enrollment rate increased from 36% to 73%. Various actions were carried out with respect to improved education quality, and about 6000 low-cost contract teachers were hired instead of the more expensive civil-service teachers. Due to high social demand for education, communities became a political force, demanding services, but could not contribute to school expenditures to the extent expected. Sector planning and management also improved, although stable policies regarding the recruitment of lower-cost teachers were not finalized.

4. Significant Outcomes/Impacts:

Access to primary school, particularly for girls :

About 675 classrooms were built (up from a target of 600), an achievement that was partly responsible for the large enrollment increase. Classrooms were built to house 23,000 new student places (46,000 students assuming double shift), and other schools for 8,500 student places were rehabilitated. (The remaining new student places needed were provided by communities.) Two girls' boarding schools were built serving 1800 girls, and their students had high examinations pass rates. Girls' enrollment increased as a result of village sensitization .

Improved quality of education :

During appraisal, there was one textbook for every four students. About 1.3 million textbooks and workbooks were distributed, raising the ratio to one textbook per two students and workbooks for every student. Book conservation policies and training in book evaluation were initiated, and all teachers received guides. At least 13,000 teachers, headmasters, and inspectors received training through programs developed by consulting firms. Double-shifting and multigrade teaching were mentioned as an achievement in the ICR. Unfortunately, the planned studies to assess their impact were not carried out. No achievement tests have been carried out, but quality of education still appears low, since the pass rate from primary to lower secondary is only 53%.

Increased management capacity . The ministry of education started producing statistics that helped in planning . In

hopes of shifting the education budget towards primary education, an operational audit of the university was carried out and discussed with students. However, it is uncertain to what extent recurrent costs were contained, given the expansion of the system, and to what extent teachers were redeployed in classrooms.

5. Significant Shortcomings (including non-compliance with safeguard policies):

The Policy and Planning Directorate was in charge of policy and also managing five parallel donor projects; it was overloaded, and with limited capacity to do the work. Civil works and textbook delivery were delayed as a result. Civil works could only be implemented through an external nonprofit agency, and animosity between the ministry and the agency brought further delays. Though textbooks were distributed, their ratio to students was only 1:2 or 1:3, thus making it impossible for students to take them home and study them extensively. However, the financial sustainability of textbooks is uncertain. The government failed to make urgent reforms to the university of Benin, an issue which continued to burden its budget. The borrower had at times limited interest and commitment in the project. However, the government expressed concerns of being neglected, because the Bank delayed in responding to PIU procurement requests at times, and staff reportedly gave limited attention to the project.

6. Ratings:	ICR	OED Review	Reason for Disagreement /Comments
Outcome:	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	
Institutional Dev.:	Modest	Modest	
Sustainability:	Likely	Likely	
Bank Performance:	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	
Borrower Perf.:	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	
Quality of ICR:		Unsatisfactory	

NOTE: ICR rating values flagged with '*' don't comply with OP/BP 13.55, but are listed for completeness.

7. Lessons of Broad Applicability:

- External nonprofit agencies (modeled after the Senegalese AGETYP) have proved to be competent executors of civil works and may facilitate execution when government agencies or the private sector are unable to do the work.
- During appraisal it is important to assess implementation capacity; agencies that have multiple projects under implementation may not be as capable of executing Bank projects as assumed.
- The capacity of communities (and families) to finance education should be carefully assessed and monitored in light of other contributions likely to be made - e.g., to primary health care.
- Textbook provision is often more difficult than expected in very low-income countries, and their financial sustainability is often uncertain. Effective means to reduce losses must be found and put in place early on in future projects involving textbooks.

8. Assessment Recommended? Yes No

Why? No education projects have been 'audited' in Benin. This project presented challenges and some innovative solutions in contract teacher deployment, girls' dormitories, textbook distribution, and community involvement.

9. Comments on Quality of ICR:

The quality is unsatisfactory. Though it gives a detailed account of the project events, it has incorrect and sometimes missing numbers (e.g. the number of primary school students should be about 2.2 million rather than 1.2 million; also, female participation gets confused with female enrollment). The ICR lacks a table to show clearly the targets and the achievements of the project; key performance indicators (annex A) show progress since the last PSR rather than appraisal, and some numbers are inconsistent. The reader must hunt for various numbers in the text. The task manager did not foresee that readers or reviewers might be outside the education sector and might not understand the commonly used terminology.