



1. Project Data

Project ID

P128644

Project Name

Sudan Basic Education Recovery Project

Country

Sudan

Practice Area(Lead)

Education

L/C/TF Number(s)

TF-13351

Closing Date (Original)

28-Feb-2017

Total Project Cost (USD)

76,472,764.09

Bank Approval Date

29-Mar-2013

Closing Date (Actual)

15-Feb-2019

IBRD/IDA (USD)
Grants (USD)

Original Commitment

76,500,000.00

76,500,000.00

Revised Commitment

76,500,000.00

76,472,764.09

Actual

76,472,764.09

76,472,764.09

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2. Project Objectives and Components

a. Objectives

According to the Emergency Project Paper (page 10) and the Global Fund for Education Grant Agreement (page 5), the project objectives were as follows:

- To improve the learning environment in targeted areas;
- To increase the availability of textbooks;
- To strengthen education planning and management mechanisms in Sudan.



The project development objectives remained the same throughout the project period; however, targets for several key project indicators were revised downward during a project restructuring in 2017. Therefore, a split rating is assessed.

b. Were the project objectives/key associated outcome targets revised during implementation?

Yes

Did the Board approve the revised objectives/key associated outcome targets?

No

c. Will a split evaluation be undertaken?

Yes

d. Components

Component 1: Improving the learning environment for schools (Appraisal: US\$ 36.2 million; Actual: US\$ 46.7 million): This component aimed to improve the learning environment for children in targeted rural disadvantaged states (marked by low gross enrollment rates, low completion rates, large numbers of out-of-school children, and high poverty) and within those states, communities marked by (i) minimum population in the village; (ii) existence/absence of a school; (ii) gap between the number of school-age children and the number of children going to school; (iii) proportion of non-durable buildings in the school; and (iv) maximum student/classroom ratio. Activities included: construction or rehabilitation of classrooms; and provision of grants to schools for operational expenditures such as learning supplies, furniture, equipment, and some recurrent costs such as water supply (with the goal of reducing the burden on communities to pay out of their household funds).

Component 2: Increasing the availability of textbooks (Appraisal: US\$ 25.8 million; Actual: US\$ 17.8 million): This component aimed to improve the policy framework for textbook provision. Activities included: development and distribution of textbooks, development of teacher guides, and teacher training on the teaching material.

Component 3: Strengthening the monitoring and management mechanisms of the education system (Appraisal: US\$ 14.5 million; Actual: US\$ 12.0 million): This component aimed to strengthen systems to deliver education services and to build the Ministry of General Education's (MoGE) capacity to collect, analyze, and use data for evidence-based planning. Activities included: launch of a National Learning Assessment; development of a teacher management system; enhancement of the education management information system; and development of the Education Sector Strategic Plan for FY2012-2016.

e. Comments on Project Cost, Financing, Borrower Contribution, and Dates

Project cost



- The project cost at appraisal was US\$76.5 million; the actual project cost was also US\$ 76.5 million.
- Component 1 (Learning Environment) costs were higher than appraised due to increased school construction costs. Component 2 (Textbooks) costs were lower than appraised due to efficiencies in the textbook procurement and distribution. Therefore, project funds were reallocated from Component 2 to Component 1 to ensure completion of construction activities.

Financing

- The project was financed entirely by a Global Partnership for Education (GPE) grant of US\$ 76.5 million, which disbursed in its entirety.

Borrower contribution

- There was no planned Borrower contribution.

Dates

- *January 2015*: The project results framework was modified such that the wording of indicators was more precise and measurable. For example, “Number of direct beneficiaries with access to textbooks” was changed to “Number of textbooks purchased and delivered to basic schools.”
- *February 2017*: The project was restructured to reallocate US\$8.0 million from Component 2 (Textbooks) to Component 1 (Learning Environment) and also US\$ 2.5 million from Component 3 (Project Management) to Component 1 (Learning Environment). The project closing date was also extended from February 2017 to February 2018.
- *February 2018*: The project closing date was extended from February 2018 to February 2019.

3. Relevance of Objectives

Rationale

At the time of project appraisal, the country of Sudan was emerging from a period marked by civil conflict, the secession of South Sudan, uncertainty in the fiscal environment, and slow restoration of public goods and services. Although basic school enrollment, including in communities affected by conflict, had been increasing (5.7% average annual growth between 2004/05 and 2008/09), the gross enrollment rate for the first six years of basic education was 76% for the 2008/09 school year, which was low compared to other lower middle-income Sub-Saharan African countries (105%). The quality of education delivery was also considered poor, according to national learning results, which the multi-donor Status of the Education



Sector in Sudan report (2011) attributed to ineffective teacher deployment and textbook utilization, and low quality learning environment and health status of students.

The government of Sudan developed an interim Basic Education Strategy for 2012-14 that identified the immediate need to improve education service delivery (both to increase access and improve quality) as well as the longer-term need to strengthen the education system as a whole. Priorities in the strategy included improved access, consistent delivery of quality education, and overall systems strengthening. The Bank's Interim Strategy Note for Sudan (FY2014-15) was the sole formal strategy produced by the Bank during the project period, identifying equitable service delivery in education and health as a focus area under Pillar 2 (Addressing Socio-Economic Roots of Conflict), with improved access to quality basic education as an expected outcome. Given the emergency context marked by major adverse economic and social impacts arising from the impending fiscal shocks and the instability caused by conflict in parts of the country, the Bank applied its guidelines for response to crises (OP/BP 8.0) to enable a rapid response. The project objectives were appropriately modest, given this country context and limited Bank engagement in the sector up to this point.

Rating

High

4. Achievement of Objectives (Efficacy)

OBJECTIVE 1

Objective

Improve the learning environment in targeted areas (ORIGINAL OUTCOME TARGETS)

Rationale

The theory of change was overall sound. To improve the learning environment, the project activities centered on improved conditions of school facilities (classrooms, kitchens, latrines, water points, etc), provision of grants to schools to purchase learning materials, furniture, equipment, etc., as well as the provision of textbooks (including training on the content). These outputs were likely to increase access to schools and improve the learning conditions in schools. Girls' schools and rural schools were specifically targeted to increase participation of girls.

(Note: Key project indicator #1 - Number of direct project beneficiaries - was an aggregate measure of results from both objectives 1 and 2. Therefore, this outcome indicator is applicable for both Objectives 1 and 2, as is the split rating methodology due to the downward revision of the target.)



Outputs

- Construction/rehabilitation of 1,226 classrooms, including latrines, water points, and fencing (original target: 2,000; revised target: 1,112). Although at the time of project closing, the target had not been met, the target has since been nearly achieved, as the government financed construction/rehabilitation of another 340 additional classrooms thereby bringing the total number to 1,566.
- Provision of training on school construction management to 300 communities (original target: 500; revised target: 149). According to the ICR (page 14), the community empowerment model (CEM) initially got off to a slow start due to low support and capacity for this decentralized approach, in which delegates for the communities took full responsibility to implement school construction (including community contracting for procurement of civil works through local competitive bidding, technical site supervision, and financial management of the contract costs). To address this initial low capacity, the project provided additional support to the project implementation unit, clustered communities into procurement and financial management agreements, and improved training modules for the communities. Implementation of the CEM approach improved significantly thereafter and "proved to be a highly effective approach that was not only implemented widely in education but also expanded to other sectors such as health."
- Provision of school grants to 6,399 communities in 83 localities, which were used for the purchase of furniture, lab equipment, and other teaching and learning materials (original target: 750; revised target: 1,500). The number of students benefiting from school grants was 1.46 million. The school grant system was initially piloted in 19 localities to ensure that lessons from the early experience would inform scaling up strategies. Intermediary support providers were initially used to manage school grants and financial flows until sufficient capacity was developed at localities. According to the ICR (page 15), the communities still contributed to the schools out of their personal funds once the grants ran out, thus demonstrating their strong commitment to education.
- Provision of training to 66,000 teachers in 189 localities on the revised textbook content, practice assessments, and related teaching methodologies. Each locality developed at least two master trainers in Math and Arabic for grades 1 to 3.

Outcomes

- The number of students with access to the additional classrooms funded by the project was 66,320. This fell short of the original target of 80,000.
- The number of project beneficiaries (for construction, school grants, and textbook activities) - defined as the number of students enrolled in primary schools in project areas (the number of classrooms multiplied by the average class size) - was 6.02 million, an increase from the baseline of 5.05 million. This surpassed the target of 5.3 million. Of these, 48.0% were female (original target: 48.0%).

Achievement is rated Modest due to partly achieved outcomes in the number of students with access to classrooms.



Rating
Modest

OBJECTIVE 1 REVISION 1

Revised Objective

Improve the learning environment in targeted areas (REVISED OUTCOME TARGETS)

Revised Rationale

Outputs

See outputs reported above under Objective 1.

Outcomes

- The number of students with access to the additional classrooms funded by the project was 66,320. This surpassed the revised target of 44,480.
- The number of project beneficiaries (for construction, school grants, and textbook activities) - defined as the number of students enrolled in primary schools in project areas (the number of classrooms multiplied by the average class size) - was 6.02 million, an increase from the baseline of 5.05 million. This essentially achieved the revised target of 6.08 million. Of these, 48.0% were female (original target: 48.0%). The average number of girls enrolled in schools that received the school grant increased by 3.3 percent over the lifespan of the project (140 in 2015 to 144 in 2018) compared to a decrease of 8.6 percent in schools that did not receive grants (129 in 2015 to 118 in 2018).

The ICR (pages 19-20) reported additional outcomes that indicate positive impact:

- The average number of students enrolled in project schools increased 6.7 percent between 2015 and 2018, compared to a decrease of 6.4 percent in non-project schools in similar localities.
- On average, students in grades 1-4 benefitting from project interventions (new classrooms and school grants) had lower repetition rates (5%) in 2018 compared to rates in 2015 (7%).
- The proportion of students in grade 3 who improved from Level 1 (less than 30 words per minute) to Level 2 (31-60 words per minute) increased by 5% from 2014 to 2018. In addition, the proportion of students who could not read decreased by 7%.

Achievement is rated Substantial due to achievement of outcomes in increasing access, along with evidence of improved education outcomes.

Revised Rating



Substantial

OBJECTIVE 2

Objective

Increase the availability of textbooks (ORIGINAL OUTCOME TARGETS)

Rationale

The theory of change discussed under Objective 1 is applicable here.

Outputs

- Technical assistance in developing textbook procurement and management capacity, and in revising textbook content. As reported in the ICR (page 16), the project faced some challenges in the procurement of the second batch of textbooks, in which the supplier failed to provide quality assurance testing prior to shipment of the first eight containers. Deviations from the specifications (such as binding) were not discovered until the shipment arrived in country.
- Provision of training to 66,000 teachers in 189 localities on the revised textbook content, practice assessments, and related teaching methodologies. Each locality developed at least two master trainers in Math and Arabic for grades 1 to 3.
- Publicity campaigns were conducted in the daily news to sensitize parents about upcoming book deliveries.

Outcomes

- The original indicator on the number of direct beneficiaries with textbooks was dropped due to lack of measurability. Instead, the indicator was revised to the number of textbooks purchased and delivered to basic schools, which reached 22.0 million (original target: 9.0 million). There were significant cost savings realized through procurement of international printing services, which also produced higher durability textbooks.
- The textbook policy was adopted in 2017, along with procurement and management strategies that were developed in consultation with stakeholders on content, gender, and conflict sensitivity.
- Core subject (Arabic, Math, Science) textbooks for Grades 1-5 were revised, including development of teachers guides (target: Grades 1-4).
- The number of project beneficiaries (for construction, school grants, and textbook activities) - defined as the number of students enrolled in primary schools in project areas (the number of classrooms multiplied by the average class size) - was 6.02 million, an increase from the baseline of 5.05 million. This surpassed the original target of 5.3 million. Of these, 48.0% were female (original target: 48.0%).



Achievement is rated High due to surpassed targets in the number of textbooks delivered.

Rating

High

OBJECTIVE 2 REVISION 1

Revised Objective

Increase the availability of textbooks (REVISED OUTCOME TARGETS)

Revised Rationale

Outputs

See outputs reported above under Objective 2.

Outcomes

- The number of textbooks purchased and delivered to basic schools reached 22.0 million (revised target: 13.0 million).
- The textbook policy was adopted in 2017, along with procurement and management strategies that were developed in consultation with stakeholders on content, gender and conflict sensitivity.
- Core subject (Arabic, Math, Science) textbooks for Grades 1-5 were revised, including development of teachers guides (target: Grades 1-4).
- The number of project beneficiaries (for construction, school grants, and textbook activities) - defined as the number of students enrolled in primary schools in project areas (the number of classrooms multiplied by the average class size) - was 6.02 million, an increase from the baseline of 5.05 million. This achieved the revised target of 6.08 million. Of these, 48.0% were female (original target: 48.0%).

Achievement is rated High due to significant surpassing of targets.

Revised Rating

High

OBJECTIVE 3

Objective

Strengthen education planning and management mechanisms



Rationale

The theory of change for this objective was sound, with technical assistance expected to develop capacity of the federal MoGE to effectively manage the school system, particularly using evidence-based planning approaches. Capacity building activities focused on the administration of a national learning assessment, development of a teacher database, and enhancement of the Education Management Information System. These outputs were critical for evidence-based planning and management such as the use of data to inform strategic targeting, budget allocations, teacher deployment, and textbook distribution. At the school level, the results from the national learning assessments were to be used to inform teachers and adjust teaching pedagogy to match students' learning levels.

Outputs

- Technical assistance in developing a teacher management system (demographics and qualifications, years of experience, career grades, and teaching assignments) and conducting national learning assessments (nationally representative sample-based assessments of early grade learning).
- Training on the collection of annual school census data.
- Training on administration of learning assessments to students.
- Preparation of an Education Sector Analysis.

Outcomes

- The teacher management database was completed in 2016 and was able to produce data for policy and strategy at the local, state and federal levels. The data was also reported on in the teacher management chapter of the Education Sector Analysis (i.e. analyses on the distribution of teachers by school and state, the share of assignment by school, locality, and state).
- A system for learning assessment at the primary level was developed. The National Learning Assessment (NLA) test was conducted twice (2014/2015 for third grade and 2017/2018 for third and sixth grade). The first NLA was administered by a third-party firm, with the second NLA administered by the MoGE. The 2015 NLA results were disseminated, including being used to inform targeting of the school grants program.
- The annual school census/rapid survey was conducted regularly for the last four academic years of the project period (2015/16, 2016/17, 2017/18, 2018/19), collecting data on school type, location, student enrollment by grade, teachers, qualifications, school facilities and infrastructure, availability of learning materials, and funding contributed by communities.
- A full Education Sector Strategic Plan was developed in October 2013, with a subsequent Plan for 2018-2022 finalized in December 2018.

Achievement is rated Substantial due to fully achieved outcomes.



Rating

Substantial

OVERALL EFFICACY

Rationale

Efficacy under the original targets is rated Substantial due to surpassed outcomes for Objective 2 and fully achieved outcomes for Objective 3, but partly achieved outcomes for Objective 1.

Efficacy under the revised targets is also rated Substantial due to surpassed outcomes for Objective 2 and fully achieved outcomes for Objectives 1 and 3.

Therefore, the overall Efficacy is rated Substantial.

Overall Efficacy Rating

Substantial

5. Efficiency

The economic analysis at appraisal (Project Paper, Annex 10) identified areas of inefficiencies in the school system that the project intended to address and also laid out economic justifications for investing in education. There was no project-specific quantitative analysis, i.e. cost-benefit or internal rate of return estimate.

The ICR did not provide any project-specific quantitative analyses, but it discussed various aspects of project implementation efficiencies. There were two project closing date extensions, adding two years to the project period, which were necessitated by issues with construction activities. These activities had been initially delayed due to project management unit staffing delays, weak procurement capacity, and slow uptake of the community empowerment model. Construction costs were higher than expected (due to high levels of inflation, deterioration of currency exchange rates, and unanticipated VAT charges to project contracts; also, initially, architectural adjustments were made to the construction design (use of more expensive roofing materials, and the use of rain water harvesting to provide drinking water in schools, all of which slightly increased costs) requiring additional project fund allocations. However, these cost increases were counterbalanced by significant cost savings from efficient textbook procurement. Following project restructuring, the project adhered more strictly to construction design specifications, used standard grade materials, and discontinued rainwater harvesting. Also, the government reimbursed the VAT charges, and the exchange rate improved.

In addition, the pilot approach for the school grants activity, given the low capacity at the local level, helped to ensure that implementation lessons from the initial round of school grants were applied to subsequent rounds to ensure effective and efficient scale-up of this activity. The target for number of schools receiving grants was, in fact, greatly exceeded by project closing. The ICR (page 21) also reported that the CEM approach "proved to be highly successful and cost-effective after the initial learning curve," although the only data provided to verify



cost-effectiveness was that the CEM model led to a cost savings of 12 percent on average compared to the conventional model (ICR, page 35).

Lastly, textbook production was outsourced internationally, leading to significant cost savings. The textbooks had an average unit price of US\$0.58, compared to the original estimate of US\$1.8. Although there were initial procurement issues with the textbooks, the target for number of textbooks delivered was greatly exceeded.

Efficiency Rating

Substantial

a. If available, enter the Economic Rate of Return (ERR) and/or Financial Rate of Return (FRR) at appraisal and the re-estimated value at evaluation:

	Rate Available?	Point value (%)	*Coverage/Scope (%)
Appraisal		0	0 <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable
ICR Estimate		0	0 <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable

* Refers to percent of total project cost for which ERR/FRR was calculated.

6. Outcome

Project under original targets - Satisfactory

Relevance of the project objectives is rated High. Achievement of the project objectives under original outcome targets is rated Substantial. Efficiency is rated Substantial.

Project under revised targets - Satisfactory

Relevance of the project objectives is rated High. Achievement of the project objectives under revised outcome targets is rated Substantial. Efficiency is rated Substantial.

Overall project outcome is therefore **Satisfactory**, consistent with only minor shortcomings in the project's preparation and implementation.

a. Outcome Rating

Satisfactory



7. Risk to Development Outcome

The risk to sustaining outcomes is high primarily due to the uncertain political/governance situation, insecure environment, and volatile economic/fiscal conditions. A new government was recently formed to lead a transition phase over the next three years, as the country continues to face high inflation, currency devaluation, and increasing arrears on international debt, with only modest prospects for economic growth. A follow-up GPE-funded project (Basic Education Support Project, P167169) is under preparation and will continue many of the same activities including classroom improvements, provision of textbooks, school grants, teacher training, learning assessments, and the school census. Local capacity to implement the CEM has been developed, evidenced by its use in non-project localities and other sectors, although sustainability of newly constructed/rehabilitated classrooms is uncertain due to a lack of maintenance arrangements and also the risk to natural hazards such as floods. Procurement capacity still needs to be strengthened as well.

8. Assessment of Bank Performance

a. Quality-at-Entry

At the time of appraisal, the Bank had been engaged in the country's education sector for five years, as one of the donor partners supporting development of the sector status report and strategic plan. Given this engagement, the Bank took on the supervisory role for the GPE-funded project, applying crisis response guidelines under OP/BP 8.0 to address urgent needs in the education sector. Hence the project design focused on delivering immediate outputs (i.e. classrooms, textbooks), building on existing institutional arrangements, and simplifying monitoring. The project design also recognized weak capacity at both the central and local levels: the project was designed to roll out in phases in order to allow the project to learn from piloting activities prior to scale-up. The project used alternate approaches (conventional procurement methods for construction, independent intermediary for school grants) until communities reached sufficient levels of capacity, and it drew project management staff from experienced units. The results framework was overall sound, with the M&E design notable for the building-in of feedback loops (pilot activities, school census data, learning assessment results).

However, despite these mitigation measures, construction still faced initial delays, and textbook procurement also had initial shortcomings.

Quality-at-Entry Rating

Satisfactory

b. Quality of supervision

The project implementation period was marked by significant external pressures, including international sanctions and escalating violence. International sanctions were imposed on the Bank of Sudan, which was service provider for the Bank, in December 2015, leading to severe cash flow shortages and delayed issuance of letters of credit (the project role was eventually taken over by the Bank of Khartoum in June



2016, which allowed the project to move forward). Increased violence and protests in Khartoum, due to hikes in fuel prices, and the ongoing conflict in Darfur also led to implementation risks for school construction and school grant activities, as well as delayed Bank missions and supervision due to delays in receiving visa approvals for Bank staff travel to Sudan.

Project delays were also caused by weak capacity, which the Bank team addressed by providing additional support to the project management unit, clustering communities for fiduciary agreements, and improved training modules for the communities. The CEM approach was slow to take hold, but following the initial learning curve, it "proved to be a highly effective approach that was not only implemented widely in education but also expanded to other sectors such as health." Project restructurings were used effectively to maintain realism of the results framework and targets, while also reallocating funds to ensure achievement of outcomes. The ICR (page 33) noted that "many of the aide memoires provided useful action plans and checklists of what needed to be done and by when to keep the project on target, and to show what had been completed." M&E implementation was effective, particularly notable given the fragile context. The ICR (page 32) noted there were some shortcomings in safeguards monitoring: "quality of supervision with respect to environmental safeguards dipped a bit during implementation due to inconsistent monitoring and reporting by the Client, as well as spotty supervision reporting from the World Bank team." Overall safeguards performance, however, was reported by the ICR (page 32) as satisfactory.

Quality of Supervision Rating

Satisfactory

Overall Bank Performance Rating

Satisfactory

9. M&E Design, Implementation, & Utilization

a. M&E Design

The results framework was overall clear and straightforward, focused on key immediate outputs and intermediate outcomes (though lacking an indicator for teacher training) given the emergency context, while also laying the groundwork for strengthened capacity to improve learning outcomes. The M&E design included activities with a longer term view, namely setting up systems to measure learning outcomes and to better manage the education sector. The project design also built in feedback loops to inform implementation - for example, rolling out of several activities in phases in order to allow the project to learn from piloting activities before scaling up, school census data to inform school grants and teacher deployment, and learning assessment results to inform teaching methodology - and included recruitment of an independent monitoring agent to conduct random spot checks to physically verify delivery of outputs.

b. M&E Implementation

Although the results framework intentionally had modest targets, given the emergency context, the groundwork was laid to be able to measure and report on additional outcomes to demonstrate impact (i.e. progress on learning outcomes). Project restructurings were used to refine the results framework, for



example modifying the wording of key indicators for more precision and adjusting targets for more realism. The project implementation unit also hired a senior M&E specialist in November 2014 to support development of an M&E plan and to ensure regular monitoring, data collection, and reporting to track activity progress.

c. M&E Utilization

The project team regularly reviewed the M&E data to track whether the project was progressing and to make adjustments to the results framework, design, implementation arrangements, and funding allocations. More specifically, M&E findings were used to: address shortcomings in the textbook development and procurement process; inform how the school grants program should be scaled up; identify poor performing schools for the school grants program; and use learning outcome information to guide policies and program implementation. The project also launched and institutionalized a rapid survey data collection methodology using tablets that eventually replaced the Education Management Information System as the source of data on schools (for example, identifying school sites for construction, candidates for the school grants program, and textbook distribution). Also, data from the teacher management database was used to prioritize the areas most in need of in-service and pre-service training.

Overall, M&E arrangements enabled assessment of project performance, particularly notable in the fragile context.

M&E Quality Rating

Substantial

10. Other Issues

a. Safeguards

The project was classified as an Environmental Category "B" project, due to school construction. An Environmental and Social Screening and Assessment Framework, required under OP/BP 8.00, was prepared accordingly. The ICR (page 32) reported that supervision with respect to environmental safeguards "dipped a bit during implementation due to inconsistent monitoring and reporting by the Client, as well as spotty supervision reporting from the World Bank team." However, by the end of the project period, there was closer attention given to safeguards issues, and on-the-ground environmental and social impact was reported as minimal.

The project also triggered safeguard policies on Physical Cultural Resources (OP/BP 4.11) and Involuntary Resettlement (OP/BP 4.12). There was no land acquisition. Instead, the project used existing school foot prints in alignment with ecological and cultural needs.

b. Fiduciary Compliance



Financial management: Initial weaknesses in fiduciary performance included delays in submission of the first Interim Financial Report (IFR, which was returned due to errors and issues), annual work plan, and training program; lack of an approved 2013 budget; delayed authorization of the 2014 budget; delays in implementing the computerized accounting system and the audit plan with the national audit chamber; and inefficiencies in the financial management information system. However, financial management performance improved over the course of the project period, through implementing a "skills transfer strategy." Subsequent financial management reviews noted that there was "reasonable assurance that the World Bank proceeds were used for the intended purposes and that the project was performing budget monitoring on grant funds, counterpart funds and the incentive funds accumulating from the sale of foreign currency" (ICR, page 31). IFRs, audit reports, and withdrawal applications were also submitted in a timely manner by the close of the project period. Internal controls were strengthened through staffing actions, such as the secondment of accountants in the finance department and the assignment of a resident Internal Auditor. The ICR did not report on whether there were any qualifications in audits.

Procurement: The project's procurement design included multiple methods, International Competitive Bidding, National Competitive Bidding, and simplified procurement methods for local competitive bidding and community contracting. However, the project faced some challenges early in the procurement process concerning the second batch of textbooks. The textbook supplier had failed to provide quality assurance testing prior to shipment of the first eight containers (per the contractual agreement with the printing company), and upon arrival in-country, it was determined that the books did not meet the quality criteria for triple binding. The company reimbursed the funds, but this led to some delays. However, the project team revised the procurement process moving forward and split the letter of guarantees for later batches so that payments were made by batch instead of all at once. The project team also carried out annual Procurement Post Reviews to ensure that all procurement activities were in accordance with Bank guidelines.

c. Unintended impacts (Positive or Negative)

Expansion of the Community Empowerment Model (CEM): The project strengthened the capacity of local communities to implement the procurement and management of construction of their classrooms and schools. The approach was deemed successful and subsequently used in other non-project localities and sectors. Specifically, the CEM approach was used to build classrooms and schools in Aldaba and Almafaza, as well as to construct a health center in Jabrat Alshikh.

d. Other

11. Ratings

Ratings	ICR	IEG	Reason for Disagreements/Comment
Outcome	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	
Bank Performance	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	



Quality of M&E	Substantial	Substantial
Quality of ICR	---	Substantial

12. Lessons

Lessons drawn by the ICR, adapted by IEG:

- The Community Empowerment Model (CEM) for school construction can be effective in building local ownership, sustainability, and capacity, given the right design elements. In the case of this project, the CEM approach included community mobilization, training, and sequencing of construction agreements (two successive contracts for one-block classrooms rather than one contract for a two-block classroom) to ensure learning-by-doing, and radio advertising to attract small-size local contractors.
- Communications campaigns can help improve monitoring of textbook distribution and accountability. In the case of this project, publicity campaigns were launched to prepare for the arrival of the books, letters were sent to the State-level Ministries of Education with the itemized number of books per school, advertisements were taken out in national newspapers to alert parents to the upcoming deliveries, and a paper trail of the distribution process was created from states to localities to administrative units to schools to enhance accountability.
- Rapid results surveys can be effective and cost-efficient in a low capacity context, as a supplement to more in-depth, sophisticated data collection for an education management information system. In the case of this project, responses to simple questionnaires were submitted electronically via tablets, thereby increasing the timeliness and quality of data collection to inform project decisions.

13. Assessment Recommended?

No

14. Comments on Quality of ICR

The ICR was commendable for strong quality of evidence and results-orientation. The analysis of evidence was particularly notable for going beyond the official results framework, providing additional data on outcomes (i.e. long-term data on learning outcomes, comparison of project vs. non-project schools). Lessons were specific and informative for similar project approaches in fragile contexts. However, the Efficiency section would have been strengthened with an economic rate of return estimate. Also, the ICR did not report on whether there were any qualifications to financial audits.



a. Quality of ICR Rating

Substantial