



1. Project Data

Project ID P131120	Project Name ZR Support to Basic Education Program	
Country Congo, Democratic Republic of	Practice Area(Lead) Education	
L/C/TF Number(s) TF-14253,TF-14358	Closing Date (Original) 31-Aug-2016	Total Project Cost (USD) 100,000,000.00
Bank Approval Date 01-May-2013	Closing Date (Actual) 28-Feb-2017	
	IBRD/IDA (USD)	Grants (USD)
Original Commitment	100,000,000.00	100,000,000.00
Revised Commitment	100,000,000.00	100,000,000.00
Actual	99,938,746.22	99,938,746.22

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2. Project Objectives and Components

a. Objectives

The project development objective (PDO) for the Support to Basic Education Program as per Schedule 1 (p. 6) of the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) Fund Grant Agreement (TF014358) was "to: (a) increase access and equity in primary education, (b) improve learning conditions in primary education, and (c) strengthen sector management and promote greater accountability by introducing new management practices at the local levels." The same objective is referenced in the Project Appraisal Document (PAD, p. vii).

There was no formal restructuring of the project; however, one PDO-level indicator was re-worded during the



Mid-Term Review (MTR, June 2015) with a view to shifting the emphasis from compliance with existing norms/standards (percentage of *bureaux gestionnaires de proximité* functioning according to regulatory norms and under a results agreement) to the funding source for the structure (percentage of *bureaux gestionnaires de proximité* financially supported by the project). This change was retrospectively endorsed by the GPE, May 23, 2016. Also, at the project design stage, baseline data on school enrollment that informed the Results Framework was sourced from the 2010 annual census. During the MTR, 2012-2013 census data were released. In consultation with the client, the project team decided to revise relevant baseline values to ensure greater relevance of measurement. Associated end-of-project targets were recalculated to reflect updated baseline figures. These changes to baselines and targets did not alter the scope of the project and, as such, no split rating is required.

Finally, for the purposes of this validation exercise, this review assesses the project across the following four objectives contained within the overall PDO:

- increase access in primary education;
- increase equity in primary education;
- improve learning conditions in primary education; and,
- strengthen sector management and promote greater accountability (by introducing new management practices) at the local levels.

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?

No

d. Components

The project had three components that respectively mirrored the objectives under which this validation is undertaken:

Component 1: Increasing access and equity at the primary level through rehabilitation and reconstruction of classrooms (original allocation, US\$24.4 million; actual cost, US\$23.5 million). To increase access and promote equity, Component 1 sought to rehabilitate and replace unsuitable classrooms, build ancillary facilities, and strengthen and complement the government's existing free primary education program and initiatives to promote girls' education. A total of 900 classrooms were identified for rehabilitation and the provision of furniture and equipment in existing schools in the provinces of Equator and Kasai-West, noting that 90% of the classrooms in question would replace temporary nondurable structures in rural areas, and 10% in peri-urban and urban areas. The construction of latrines



and the provision of clean water was intended to help attract and retain girls in school, and the approach explicitly included the rehabilitation of schools attended by indigenous people. The distribution of resources between the two provinces was premised on the number of classrooms and girls enrolled, with a 60/40 percent weighting in favor of classrooms and number of girls. Based on these criteria, 56.51 percent of the funds were allocated to Equator and 43.49 percent to Kasai-West. Work on classrooms and schools was to be implemented based on a delegation/decentralization principle that would be reflected, for example, in recruitment, capacity building efforts, involvement of local school networks in the selection of schools, and the involvement of local officials in the supervision and oversight of tasks. The execution of the infrastructure program would build on the government construction strategy that promotes the use of appropriate technology and local materials and through the outsourcing of the program to specialized executing entities with community participation, in line with the approach being used for the school infrastructure program under then-existing World Bank support, as well as by other international donors, such as the United Nations Children's Fund and the French Development Agency.

Component 2: Improving the quality of the learning environment (original allocation: US\$60.1 million; actual cost: US\$63.0 million) was to provide support under two sub-components:

Sub-component 2.1: Strengthening in-service training sought to improve teacher quality, which had been badly affected through the crisis period. Building on the successful elements of ongoing training programs implemented by in other parts of the country by other development partners (such as the French Development Agency, United States Agency for International Development, and the *Agence universitaire de la Francophonie*), the sub-component would combine a distance training and on-site approach, with delivery anchored at the individual school, and networks of three schools, with upward linkages through representative structures to the central ministry. A joint technical committee of the *Direction des Programmes et du Matériel Didactique* (Curriculum and Teaching Materials Division, DIPROMOD) would provide overall guidance for the training component of the project, with support from local and international technical experts.

Sub-component 2.2: Provision of learning materials was designed to support the acquisition and distribution of textbooks to all public and private primary education schools countrywide. Specifically, the sub-component sought the procurement and distribution of textbooks for grades 3 and 4 for French and math (reprint and distribution of 4.5 million books), and for grades 5 and 6 in French, math, and sciences (procurement and distribution of about 9.9 million new editions of textbooks and complementary teacher guides). In addition, the sub-component was to support the procurement and distribution of about 1.8 million textbooks and teacher guides for civics and moral education for grades 5 and 6 that would be prepared by the education ministry. The sub-component would also finance training in the preparation of textbooks; define the technical and pedagogical specifications of textbooks; institutionalize evaluation of textbooks; and support logistics related to management of textbook stocks and distribution. It would also support the DIPROMOD with the development of a textbook policy, strategy, and program through the provision of materials and equipment to improve its effectiveness.

Component 3: Strengthening sector management (original allocation: US\$15.5 million; actual cost: US\$13.4 million) was to support interventions aimed at ensuring that education sector management regulations were applied and strengthened as a basis for more efficient and more accountable sector management, and was comprised of three sub-components.

Sub-component 3.1: Restructuring of the education administrative offices, which sought to ensure that the school management offices closest to schools provide the necessary support to allow for



improvements in the quality of primary education through the introduction of results-based agreements designed to re-establish norms and standards that would facilitate provision of cost-effective quality education and increased accountability. This process was to progress along a road map that would be introduced at the sub-provincial level in the two selected provinces and that targeted the over-staffing of offices due to unauthorized recruitment. Other issues, such as the retirement of eligible staff, would not be addressed, as this would require a broader, national approach. To ensure transparency and objectivity in implementing reforms, representative commissions would be established at the central and provincial levels, and, to complement support from managing agencies, parental and community involvement in school management would be strengthened.

Sub-component 3.2: Other strengthening of institutional capacity sought to support the development of a national strategy for girls' education, in consultation with United Nations Children's Fund and the U.K. Department for International Development, and to enhance teacher management through the provision of a program of technical support delivered over a three-year period. This program was to respond to the findings of an organizational diagnostic, supported by the then-current Education Sector Support project (PARSE), the results of which would be applied to the *Service de Contrôle et de la Paie des Enseignants* (Inspection and Payroll Service for Teachers, SECOPE).

Sub-component 3.3: Project management and coordination sought to support project management and coordination through the financing of medium-term consultant services and technical assistance in the education sector, and to support workshops, technical seminars, and training in project management skills. This sub-component would also provide financing for the acquisition of computer equipment, office materials, and supplies as well support the development and implementation of communication strategies and campaigns to bolster the fee-free policy, and it would finance supervision costs and provide additional resources for monitoring and evaluation (e.g., collection and analysis of school statistics in the selected provinces).

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

Project Cost: The project was estimated to cost US\$100 million. Actual cost was US\$99.9 million. There were slight deviations from planned costs at the component level. The ICR notes that the final Implementation Status Report (February 28, 2017) recorded actual disbursement of US\$100 million, but undisbursed funds of US\$61,000 were returned to the Bank on July 17, 2017, and a reimbursement of an ineligible expenditure of US\$14,686 is currently being processed.

Financing: The project was financed in full through the Global Partnership for Education (GPE).

Dates: The project was approved on May 1, 2013, and became effective July 23, 2013. A Midterm Review was completed in July 2015, and the project was restructured on May 23, 2016. The restructuring, which was approved by the GPE, involved an extension of the planned closing by six months to allow for completion of activities. The project closed on February 28, 2017, which was six months later than originally planned (August 31, 2016).



3. Relevance of Objectives & Design

a. Relevance of Objectives

Project objectives were relevant to the government's 2010 sector strategy and the Bank Group's Country Assistance Strategy (CAS) at the design stage. Objectives were also closely aligned with the Interim Education Plan (IEP) that was developed by the government, in consultation with donors, to operationalize the sector strategy (PAD, pg.4). Significant government investment in education in the years leading up to the start of the project had resulted in the realization of a 94 percent gross enrollment rate in primary education, and the gradual introduction of a fee-free policy for primary education further strengthened this positive trend in access, specifically for children from poorer households, and contributed to a reduction in gender disparity (2010). However, challenges remained, with barriers to access and continued inequity driven by high costs to households, poor infrastructure, and socio-economic and cultural factors that constrain access for girls as well as children from low income groups and hard-to-reach areas. Furthermore, a poor learning environment, underpinned by poor teaching skills and the limited availability of textbooks, undermined the quality of student learning. Deficiencies resulting from the dual character of education management (72 percent of students attend schools owned and managed by churches and religious communities but fully or partially funded by the government, with only 17 percent attending secular public schools, and private schools accounting for the remaining 11 percent) also impeded efficiency and accountability. At project close, the objectives remained relevant to the government's overall vision for an inclusive, quality education system as expressed through various strategic documents identified in the ICR (p. 16), including: 1) Vision Congo 2010-2030; 2) Education and Training Sector Strategy 2016-2025; 3) CAS 2013-2016; and 4) World Bank Global Education Sector Strategy 2020.

Rating

High

Revised Rating

Not Rated/Not Applicable

b. Relevance of Design

The relatively simple project design was broadly robust and well thought through. The Results Framework was well defined, with clear objectives and a logical flow between planned activities and intended outcomes. The focus on just three components that mirrored project objectives ensured clarity and manageability. Poverty and equity concerns informed the selection of the two provinces (Equateur and Kasai-West) that formed the focus for the first objective and Component 1. As noted in the ICR, "appropriate targeting mechanisms were used to maximize impact and to ensure that the project reached schools in hard-to-reach areas, with a particular focus on girls and disadvantaged groups (indigenous peoples, students with physical disabilities)" (p. 16). The project also used existing structures, and systems familiar to policymakers, stakeholders, and implementing agencies to ensure efficient implementation. However, risk mitigation did not adequately take certain potential challenges into consideration, such as limited capacity of construction companies in targeted provinces, the complexity of textbook procurement and distribution processes, and complexities associated with institutional reforms.



Rating
Substantial

Revised Rating
Not Rated/Not Applicable

4. Achievement of Objectives (Efficacy)

Objective 1

Objective

Increase access in primary education

Rationale

Achievement values for the access indicators are based on the 2015-2016 provincial annual school census. Baselines and targets are established with reference to 2012/13 census data, with which baselines were updated and targets recalibrated following the MTR. Results are provided by province.

Outputs:

- In Equateur, 480 classrooms were built or rehabilitated, almost reaching the target of 504. 78 latrine blocks were built and water points installed, almost reaching the target of 84.
- In Kasai-West, 378 classrooms were built or rehabilitated, almost reaching the target of 396. 63 latrine blocks were built, almost reaching the target of 66, and 23 water points installed, not reaching the target of 66. The shortfall in water points was due to some sites encountering deeper excavation than foreseen, resulting in what would have been unacceptably high construction costs.

The shortfall overall in planned versus actual construction was due to the cancellation of 42 planned classrooms where actual costs would have exceeded appraisal costs by more than 20 percent. Desks, chairs, and other appropriate furniture was also provided, though the ICR (p. 39) notes that some of the pieces were not aligned with quality/durability standards.

The project also financed awareness campaigns focusing on school safety, security, and HIV prevention in order to boost enrollments. This campaign contained a focus on girls' education and education for indigenous peoples.

Outcomes (Equateur):

A number of targets were exceeded:

- Increase in the total number of primary school children in the province (from 1.37 million to 1.55 million exceeding the target of 1.5million)
- Increase in the total number of first year entrants in the province (from 0.341 million to 0.420 million,



exceeding the target of 0.373 million)

The target for overall rate of intake to first year of primary school was exceeded as follows:

	Baseline (%)	Target (%)	Achieved (%)
Total	65	71	85

Outcomes (Kasai-West):

A number of targets were exceeded:

- Increase in the total number of primary school children in the province (from 1.07 million to 1.43 million exceeding the target of 1.17 million)
- Increase in the total number of first year entrants in the province (from 0.275 million to 0.383 million, exceeding the target of 0.301 million)

However, the targeted rate of intake to the first year of primary school was not realized. The ICR notes that "data show mixed progress on the primary net first-year intake rate, with a decrease from 85 percent in 2013 to 80.1 at the end of the project, thus falling short on the end of project target of 95 percent" and that this result is inconsistent with the previous year figure which shows a first-year intake rate of 103 percent as of August 2016. As such, the ICR suggests the result needs to be taken with caution given the weak education statistics system (ICR, pp. 48-49).

	Baseline (%)	Target (%)	Achieved (%)
Total	75	95	80

Rating
 Substantial

Objective 2

Objective

Increase equity in primary education

Rationale

Achievement values for equity indicators are based on the 2015-2016 provincial annual school census. Baselines and targets are established with reference to 2012/13 census data, with which baselines



were updated and targets recalibrated following the MTR. Results are provided by province.

The **outputs** are those cited under the first objective.

Outcomes (Equateur):

A number of targets set out in related intermediate indicators were exceeded:

- Increase in the number of girls (from 0.624 million to 0.722 million, exceeding the target of 0.682 million)
- Increase in the number of first year female entrants (from 0.160 million to 0.191 million, exceeding the target of 0.174 million)

The targeted rate of intake of boys and girls to first year of primary school was exceeded as follows:

	Baseline (%)	Target (%)	Achieved (%)
Male	70	76	91
Female	61	66	80
Total	65	71	85

Overall, the gender parity index improved over the life of the project (from a baseline of 0.84 to an outturn of 0.87) but fell short of the target, which was 0.89.

Outcomes (Kasai-West):

A number of targets set out in related intermediate indicators were exceeded:

- Increase in the number of girls (from 0.4874 million to 0.672 million, exceeding the target of 0.532 million)
- Increase in the number of first year female entrants (from 0.129 million to 0.180 million, exceeding the target of 0.141 million)

However, the targeted rate of intake of boys and girls to first year of primary school was not realized (noting caution regarding data consistencies in Kasai-West already referenced above).

	Baseline (%)	Target (%)	Achieved (%)
Male	91	98	80
Female	79	91	80
Total	75	95	80

Overall, the gender parity index, calculated based on the above enrollment data, improved over the life of the project and exceeded the target, moving from a baseline of 0.83 to an outturn of 0.93 (original target 0.88).



IEG also notes that equity is more broadly defined in the PAD (paragraphs 9, 10, 13, 82, 126) to include not only gender but also income, indigenous peoples, and hard-to-reach areas. The ICR does not provide data that would shed light on project achievement in support of these groups. The project TTL and the ICR author informed IEG that the project was successfully implemented in relevant areas in favor of indigenous communities, and that children from those communities form part of the overall access totals (boys and girls).

Rating
Modest

Objective 3

Objective

Improve learning conditions in primary education

Rationale

Outputs (Equateur)

- The percentage of *bureaux gestionnaires de proximité* (local office managers) financially supported by the project was 85%, exceeding the target value of 65%.
- For both provinces, the number of textbooks and teachers' guides distributed exceeded the target: 22,424,797 against a target of 20,000,000.
- In both provinces, a system to monitor and evaluate teachers' in-service training was put in place.

Outcomes (Equateur)

- The ratio of French textbooks to pupils in Grades 3 and 4 improved significantly over the life of the project (from a baseline of 0.62, to an outturn of 0.92) but fell short of the target ratio of 1.
- The ratio of French textbooks to pupils in Grades 5 and 6 exceeded the target, reaching a ratio of 1.37 against a baseline of 0.3, and a target of 1.
- The ratio of Math textbooks to pupils in Grades 3 and 4 met the target (a ratio of 1 against a baseline of 0.6).
- The ratio of Math textbooks to pupils in Grades 5 and 6 exceeded the target, reaching a ratio of 1.44 against a baseline of 0.3, and a target of 1.
- A total of 19,080 qualified primary teachers were put in service as a result of project training, not reaching the target of 21,000.



Outputs (Kasai-West)

- In addition to the outputs listed above, the percentage of *bureaux gestionnaires de proximité* (local office managers) financially supported by the project was 82%, exceeding the target value of 65%.

Outcomes (Kasai-West)

- The ratio of French textbooks to pupils in Grades 3 and 4 improved significantly over the life of the project (from a baseline of 0.64, to an outturn of 0.72) but fell short of the target ratio of 1.
- The target ratio of French textbooks to pupils in Grades 5 and 6 was achieved, meeting the target of 1 vs a baseline of 0.4.
- The ratio of Math textbooks to pupils in Grades 3 and 4 improved significantly over the life of the project (from a baseline of 0.50 to an outturn of 0.84) but fell short of the target ratio of 1.
- The target ratio of Math textbooks to pupils in Grades 5 and 6 was achieved, meeting the target of 1 vs a baseline of 0.4.
- A total of 13,895 qualified primary teachers were put in service as a result of project training, not reaching the target of 21,000. The shortfall is attributed to delays in designing modules and to inaccessibility of certain locations.

Rating

Substantial

Objective 4

Objective

Strengthen sector management and promote greater accountability by introducing new management practices at the local levels

Rationale

Outputs

Technical assistance was provided on management of infrastructure, pedagogical inputs, and personnel in a coherent, cost-effective manner. The administrative division in charge of teacher management was provided with information technology to digitize school records.

Outcomes

- In Equateur, the targeted 75 percent of school clusters organized inter-school pedagogical meetings,



against a baseline of 10 percent. In Kasai-West, the increase was from the baseline of 10 percent to 85 percent, exceeding the target of 75 percent.

- For both provinces, a draft monitoring tool was developed but, at project close, the tool had not been validated, and was not in use by school inspectors during school supervision.
- For both provinces, the target percentage (75%) of administrative offices closest to schools having School Management Board quarterly meetings documented by minutes was exceeded (82%).
- Two annual qualitative surveys were undertaken in 2014 and 2016, respectively, by school administrative offices, which was below the target of three surveys.
- School censuses were published in both provinces for 2014-2015 and 2016-2017.

Rating

Substantial

5. Efficiency

The project was broadly designed to enhance quality in education delivery, and the expectation was that efficiencies would be achieved in reducing the repetition rate from 12 to 7 percent between 2010 and 2015, and that the reduction in the then rate of repetition would reduce drop-out based on a demonstrated association between the two phenomena such that the expected school life expectancy would increase from 8.5 years to 8.9 years. A Public Expenditure Review for the DRC estimated the private, public, and social benefits generated by education, and found an additional year of education in DRC is associated with an average increase of 9.1 percent in monthly earnings, and that education is associated with better earnings and household income at all education levels. The ICR (p. 54) reports these findings, but it does not report any analysis undertaken with a view to establishing specific retention or other benefits associated with this specific project.

About 70 percent of project expenditure was absorbed by school construction costs and the procurement of teaching and learning materials. Annex 3 of the ICR provides an economic and financial analysis that establishes that the unit cost of construction (Component 1) compares favorably to other donor-funded projects in the country and is comparable to other fragile countries. Specifically, the unit cost of construction per classroom was US\$40,800 (about 7 percent higher than appraisal estimate), but was comparable to costs associated with two recently closed projects in Liberia where unit cost per classroom was, respectively, US\$40,000 and US\$37,166. That said, the unit cost per classroom is considerably higher than in other low-capacity countries where classroom construction costs range between US\$20,000 and US\$25,000. The analysis also found that the unit costs for the purchase of teaching and learning materials (Component 2) was higher than most countries in the region but lower than fragile countries like Sierra Leone and Liberia.



Although, overall, the project came in on budget, the higher than estimated cost of textbook procurement (Component 2.1) required the redistribution of funding resulting in the reallocation of an additional 3.6 percent of project funds to Component 2. The unit cost for textbooks, without delivery, was US\$1.88, 37 percent higher than the previous education project in the DRC, and considerably higher than costs in certain comparable projects in the region (e.g. in Eritrea, the unit cost was US\$0.96; in Mauritania, the unit cost was US\$0.66), although lower than in others (e.g., in Sierra Leone, the unit cost ranged from US\$1.95 to US\$3.33, and in Liberia, the unit cost was US\$4.0). With distribution, the unit cost for this project was US\$2.06. The ICR also notes that lack of accurate enrollment data and effective demand forecasting led to a surfeit of French and Math textbooks for Grades 5 and 6.

Efficiency was also hampered by a fire that broke out in storage facilities (in mid-August 2016) that destroyed half of the equipment that had been procured for distribution to the four rural sub-divisional teacher training centers and school networks, at an estimated loss of US\$0.49 million.

Efficiency Rating

Modest

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

The objectives were highly relevant to country conditions, government strategy, and Bank strategy. Design was substantially relevant, with logical and plausible linkages between planned activities and intended outcomes. The objective to increase access in primary education was substantially achieved, with core targets regarding participation exceeded in both target provinces. The objective to increase equity in primary education was modestly achieved, with targets for an outcome indicator in one province not achieved, and core targets regarding participation not achieved in another. The ICR also does not report on several equity dimensions that were specified in the PAD. The objective to improve learning conditions in primary education was substantially achieved, with many of the core targets regarding textbook distribution and textbook/pupil ratio achieved. The objective to strengthen sector management and promote greater accountability (by introducing new



management practices) at the local levels was substantially achieved. Efficiency was modest. These ratings are indicative of moderate shortcomings in the project's preparation and implementation, resulting in an Outcome rating of Moderately Satisfactory.

- a. Outcome Rating**
Moderately Satisfactory

7. Rationale for Risk to Development Outcome Rating

The Government continues to demonstrate political and financial commitment in support of primary education and improved outcomes in education more generally. The World Bank Group, GPE, and other donors continue to provide support across the education system, noting general buy-in to an agreed roadmap for progress that covers reestablishing norms and standards, the provision of cost-effective quality education, and increased accountability for results. A new education project, the GPE-funded Education Quality Improvement Project (EQUIP- P157922), which involves a progressive shift towards improving the quality of learning in primary education, was approved in FY2017. Project design builds on reforms initiated under this project and its predecessor, with a focus on teacher training, teacher support, and teacher management. However, taking a broader view, fiscal constraints make it difficult to guarantee ongoing investment at a level commensurate with requirements, introducing an element of risk going forward.

- a. Risk to Development Outcome Rating**
Modest

8. Assessment of Bank Performance

a. Quality-at-Entry

The project, simple in design, but ambitious in scope and scale, drew on lessons from past and ongoing experience, including lessons from projects executed in other post-conflict countries, other GPE-financed projects, and the experience of implementing the IDA-supported Education Sector Support Project. For example, the PAD (p. 17) notes that the approach to distributing textbooks under Component 2 was influenced by past experience, and that decentralization of textbook distribution would reduce the need to manage large stocks and to fund heavy transportation. Based on past experience, the project also allowed for used of a "hotline" (text transformed into email) that enabled citizens to report on the quality of service delivery, and this was also intended to help overcome the communication challenges associated with the large size of the country and limited infrastructure.

The project was also the product of strong, ongoing interaction between the Bank team and government,



noting the quality of that relationship has resulted in a third project that continues the longer-term reform effort in the education sector. The Bank team also demonstrated strong working relationships with other development partners with whom it (and the Government) adopted a coordinated approach that sought to maximize investment and minimize duplication. That approach, for example, informed the selection of the provinces that formed the focus for Component 1. The ICR also notes that the project benefited from a Quality Enhancement Review (June 2012) that acknowledged the team's efforts to enhance alignment with government and donor efforts in a complex environment. The team also acted on recommendations from the review to strengthen project design, ensuring the targets set out in the Results Framework were appropriate with reference to the project time frame, and aligning with the Government's strategic agenda as well as the specifics of the Interim Education Plan (IEP) for 2012-14; in fact, the project objectives and components are directly linked to the core ambition of that Plan.

On the other hand, the ICR notes that the team could have devised a more concrete action plan and could have more effectively fleshed out the risk mitigation measures identified in the PAD. In that regard, the team accurately identified and assessed risks, particularly to do with institutional capacity and level of readiness, but mitigation measures did not fully account for identified weaknesses, and this eventually resulted in implementation delays (e.g., relating to capacity to conduct oversight during construction, use of local networks or transportation for delivery of textbooks, and suboptimal introduction of results agreements with sub-national units).

Quality-at-Entry Rating

Moderately Satisfactory

b. Quality of supervision

Frequent supervision missions were executed that supported close project monitoring and close liaison and coordination with government. The supervision effort was characterized by continuity; in particular, the same task team leader was in place throughout the life of the project. Appropriate technical expertise (e.g., on construction, textbooks) served to support the development of client capacity and to enhance the relationship between the team and the client. There were eight Implementation Status Reports, and a Mid-term Review (MTR) was undertaken in June 2015. The MTR cemented the team's view that shortcomings in project monitoring needed to be addressed, and appropriate changes were made to the Results Framework; however, the changes were not processed through a formal restructuring, although they were later endorsed by the GPE. In relation to oversight of procurement, the ICR also notes that more organized planning of field visits, mission support, and supervision would have allowed for more efficient management of construction activities and some efficiency gains.

Quality of Supervision Rating

Moderately Satisfactory

Overall Bank Performance Rating



Moderately Satisfactory

9. Assessment of Borrower Performance

a. Government Performance

The Government has demonstrated ongoing support and ownership, not only for this project but for also for earlier and ongoing projects in support of the education sector. Increases in exchequer support and the designation of a Technical Advisory Unit with responsibility for donor coordination further signaled government support and commitment to maximizing synergies between national and donor efforts. A Project Implementation Team was established, and the Secretary General ensured that it was appropriately supported. That support ensured adequate financial management. The ICR notes the active role played by the government in the MTR, its proactive role in organizing Joint Annual Reviews, and its ongoing commitment to and support for complex reforms. There was a delay in the recruitment of an Environmental and Social Safeguard Specialist, as well as an M&E expert, and this hindered technical progress, although this issue was addressed once personnel were hired. The ICR notes that local level implementation was somewhat hindered when, after six months of project implementation, the government did not follow through on its commitment to finance provincial-level administrative offices. The ICR also notes that better strategic coordination and sequencing would have ensured more efficient implementation, although, broadly speaking, government commitment has been significant and has contributed to the achievement of results.

Government Performance Rating

Moderately Satisfactory

b. Implementing Agency Performance

The ICR provides no assessment of implementing agency performance, as the project was implemented by and through the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, i.e., there was no separate implementing agency. In that regard, this ICR Review rates the implementing structure, acknowledging that it flows, in total, from the Ministry. At the central level, the project was headed by a Steering Committee chaired by the Minister of Education with membership including representation from the Office of the President, other ministries, the Donor Coordinating Agency, and the Secretary General (SG) of the Education Ministry, with observer status for the World Bank. The SG's office was responsible for overall project management, supervision, and coordination, and the project management team was located in the SG's office, supported by fiduciary and procurement specialists from the earlier Bank-financed project. A Technical Committee (core group including the heads of the Directorates responsible for key project components, notably school construction, sector planning, pedagogical inputs, teacher training, teacher management, and system governance) and a Technical Advisory Unit (national and international experts) worked closely together, meeting on a regular basis, and reporting to the Secretary General. At the provincial level, the Provincial Education Offices were responsible for project oversight, and were each strengthened by a bespoke team (financial officer, and a qualified engineer). Local Executing Agencies (LEA) were recruited at the provincial level with support from the central level, to recruit general contractors (responsible for studies and oversight of the construction works), local enterprises to carry out construction, and firms to deliver furniture. Local communities represented by school management committees (COGE), trained by the



LEAs, were responsible for the maintenance of the buildings and the furniture. The COGEs were involved in implementation arrangements such as monitoring progress of construction works and the reception of buildings and furniture.

The ICR notes that the Mid-Term Review found, in practice, weak internal communication and decision-making channels, with limited collaboration, which served to create implementation bottlenecks. Capacity to effectively communicate project results to stakeholders and the public was also deemed insufficient. The ICR also notes that the Ministry took strong ownership of the reform agenda and understood the need for strategic oversight of project implementation. Work and functioning of the annual Steering Committee meeting, chaired by the Minister, was effective in guiding project implementation strategies and addressing related challenges and bottlenecks. The Minister's engagement and participation in meetings with LEAs was critical in building commitment to project objectives. However, whereas Implementation Progress was rated Satisfactory initially, it dropped to Moderately Satisfactory from mid-2015 to project end due to implementation delays, as well as the Government's failure to follow through on its commitment to finance provincial-level administrative offices. The ICR confirms that, at the central level, procurement activities were handled by a newly created procurement unit, and at the decentralized level, procurement activities were carried out by LEAs under contract to the Ministry at the provincial level. These arrangements were overseen by Provincial Education Offices (for whom, the ICR confirms, specialist staffing enhancement occurred).

Implementing Agency Performance Rating
Moderately Satisfactory

Overall Borrower Performance Rating
Moderately Satisfactory

10. M&E Design, Implementation, & Utilization

a. M&E Design

M&E design was robust, supported by appropriate expertise (including recruitment of an M&E expert to support efforts at the central and local levels). The team used data from the 2010 annual school census to define indicators (at the time, the most up-to-date, reliable, and appropriate source), and the indicators were measureable, clearly linked to the project's PDOs. Sub-provincial offices were responsible for data collection and collation and for preparation of M&E reports that were then to be forwarded to Provincial Education Offices. The PAD also noted that sub-provincial offices would closely monitor the performance of school heads and teachers, and would meet formally as a Technical Committee on a regular basis to monitor and coordinate project implementation. Funding was earmarked in Component 3 to support the collection and analysis of data from the targeted provinces.

b. M&E Implementation



In practice, data collected through regular monitoring exercises was collated in biannual progress reports and reflected in Implementation Status Reports. However, despite the general efficacy of the system, certain challenges were encountered in M&E implementation. The ICR notes a delay in the recruitment of an M&E specialist (actual date of recruitment not provided), which meant that M&E capacity was not as well developed and supported as planned, resulting in less-than-optimal monitoring of construction activities in certain instances (noting that geographical remoteness also affected M&E implementation). A construction audit found that under-monitoring ultimately affected the quality of work in terms of full compliance with technical specifications. The recruitment of the M&E specialist resulted in improvement, and subsequent efforts succeeded in better measuring progress and achievements. At a technical level, more up-to-date data became available to underpin the Results Framework with the release of the 2012-13 census (the team had used the 2010 census for baseline purposes at design stage), and the government, the Bank, and other development partners decided to revise the framework accordingly, modifying the baselines and adjusting/recalculating associated targets.

c. M&E Utilization

M&E output was used in reporting on progress and achievements, and to support close coordination and interaction between the Bank team and government at various levels of the system. Joint Review Meetings (exact number/frequency not provided) contributed to building ownership, trust, and cohesion, and were used as opportunities to fine tune the project in line with experience. The publication of updated census data and the MTR were used by the government and the Bank as an opportunity to revise baselines and strengthen the currency of the Results Framework. Although, overall, M&E information was useful, the ICR (p. 13) comments that M&E utilization could have been further enhanced "if the Bank and the Government had been able to more effectively disseminate information on project achievements and involve beneficiaries in project monitoring."

M&E Quality Rating

Substantial

11. Other Issues

a. Safeguards

The project triggered four safeguards policies, including two environmental safeguards (OP 4.01 Environmental Assessment, and OP 4.11 Physical Cultural Resources), and two social safeguards (OP 4.12 Involuntary Resettlement, and OP 4.10 Indigenous People). The environmental safeguards were triggered regarding civil works involved in the rehabilitation/reconstruction of schools. The social safeguards were triggered given the possibility (on an exceptional basis) of land acquisition for school rehabilitation (OP 4.12), and the fact that the two provinces in which Component 1 was implemented included Indigenous Peoples in the project area (OP 4.10). An Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) was developed through consultations, before being submitted to the Bank's Infoshop and disclosed in-country on November 2, 2012 (PAD, p. 13). Ultimately, the ICR reports the project had no significant irreversible



environmental and social impacts. The ICR notes that the ESMF was used as a tool to avoid/minimize environmental and social impacts due to project-led construction (p.13), and that a dedicated safeguards specialist was hired in 2016 to ensure adherence with safeguards standards and requirements through the implementation of an Indigenous Peoples Plan (IPP). On the other hand, a mid-term and final audit of the implementation of the mitigation measures and of the implementation of the IPP, recommended in the ESMF, was not undertaken. The ICR (p. 14) rates safeguards compliance Moderately Satisfactory.

b. Fiduciary Compliance

The ICR reports that Financial Management (pp. 14-15) was well managed by a seasoned team who had experience working on other World Bank-funded projects, that three external audits were carried out in a timely manner, and that no significant issues were identified. The project’s internal control system consistently provided timely and reliable information to help manage and monitor implementation. As noted above, ineligible expenditures of \$US14,686 were incurred (unjustified advances to external third parties) and are being recouped.

The project contributed to the establishment of a procurement unit supported by appropriate expertise to manage the considerable procurement required under the school construction program. The ICR states that procurement was, for the most part, timely and effective, and in compliance with World Bank procurement procedures. Minor issues (e.g., poor contract management, delays, and less-than-absolute observation of technical specifications in construction contract execution) arose from time to time; however, the majority of construction activities and all textbooks were delivered, and no significant issues arose.

c. Unintended impacts (Positive or Negative)

None reported.

d. Other

12. Ratings

Ratings	ICR	IEG	Reason for Disagreements/Comment
Outcome	Moderately Satisfactory	Moderately Satisfactory	---
Risk to Development Outcome	Modest	Modest	---



Bank Performance	Moderately Satisfactory	Moderately Satisfactory	---
Borrower Performance	Moderately Satisfactory	Moderately Satisfactory	---
Quality of ICR		Substantial	---

Note

When insufficient information is provided by the Bank for IEG to arrive at a clear rating, IEG will downgrade the relevant ratings as warranted beginning July 1, 2006.

The "Reason for Disagreement/Comments" column could cross-reference other sections of the ICR Review, as appropriate.

13. Lessons

IEG concurs with lessons learned as set out in the ICR (p. 25), including the following regarding operations in a fragile context:

- Enhancing Ministry of Education capacities (e.g., technical management of school construction and textbook production, strengthening teamwork) in a fragile context, while effectively delivering a program, can serve as a bridge towards sustainable development. In this case, the project involved Ministry of Education staff in day-to-day activities, thereby deepening experience and the ability to deliver services on an ongoing basis, and enhancing technical expertise (e.g., school construction, textbook production) and teamwork.
- Social accountability can be successfully used in fragile contexts to promote accountability at local and national levels. The project used a web-based platform to engage with parents and communities, and this served as a catalyst for social development through effective information sharing and citizen oversight.
- Effective preparation and strategic monitoring of civil works in a fragile context is one of the most critical steps for achieving targeted results in terms of both quality and quantity. The project managed to construct and rehabilitate a significant number of classrooms, and to build latrines, water points, and staff offices; however, cost overruns resulted in the numbers and/or specifications of classrooms and water points being reduced. The ICR notes (pg. 33) that a thorough assessment at appraisal stage, overseen by skilled employees, “and the capacity of the private sector to procure and deliver construction materials in a timely manner as well as the selection of the construction sites, are key to effective risk assessment and for setting realistic timeframes and cost estimates.”

IEG also concurs with the broader observation regarding the importance of taking a longer-term perspective in addressing far-reaching reforms, and the associated theory of change. This project (PROSEB) was preceded by PARSE and is followed by the EQUIP project involving significant buy-in from stakeholders based on shared understanding of challenges, and ongoing development of institutional capacity.



14. Assessment Recommended?

Yes

Please explain

The project has the potential for further learning for areas of particular interest (individually or combined) to IEG's current work program and priorities, i.e., fragility, delivery, and gender equality.

15. Comments on Quality of ICR

The ICR is concise, clear, and well written. It provides useful and informative coverage on the history and context for the project as well as sound analysis of project achievements supported by an easy-to-follow narrative. The ICR is also candid and balanced in its judgment, and it identifies useful lessons, particularly those related to delivering successful operations in fragile contexts. The ICR does not provide detail on other dimensions of equity beyond gender (i.e., indigenous people, the poor), and could have provided more detail on the performance of the implementation structure as a whole to support more in-depth assessment of implementation arrangements and their effectiveness.

a. Quality of ICR Rating

Substantial