



<b>1. Project Data:</b>		<b>Date Posted :</b> 09/17/2004	
<b>PROJ ID:</b> P009550		<b>Appraisal</b>	<b>Actual</b>
<b>Project Name:</b> Primary Education Development Project	<b>Project Costs (US\$M)</b>	2039.5	
<b>Country:</b> Bangladesh	<b>Loan/Credit (US\$M)</b>	150.0	90.1
<b>Sector(s):</b> Board: ED - Primary education (82%), Tertiary education (9%), Central government administration (3%), Sub-national government administration (3%), Other social services (3%)	<b>Cofinancing (US\$M)</b>	220.8	-
<b>L/C Number:</b> CN038			
	<b>Board Approval (FY)</b>		98
<b>Partners involved :</b> ADB, IDB, DFID, UNICEF, UNFPA, KfW, Norway, Sweden	<b>Closing Date</b>	12/30/2003	12/30/2003

<b>Prepared by :</b>	<b>Reviewed by :</b>	<b>Group Manager :</b>	<b>Group:</b>
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**2. Project Objectives and Components**

**a. Objectives**

The credit supported a slice of the government's Primary Education Development Program (PEDP) which comprised a total of 9 major and discrete donor funded projects and 18 Government of Bangladesh (GOB) projects, bound by a common policy framework. The objectives of the project (as per the loan agreement) were to: a) improve school quality and system efficiency; b) establish a sustainable, cost effective and better managed education system; and c) ensure universal coverage and equitable access to quality primary schooling.

**b. Components**

There were 3 components to this project as follows (funding levels are estimated PEDP totals) :

- i) Improving school quality and system efficiency (\$293.9m)
- ii) Strengthening institutional capacity and management (\$53.7m)
- iii) Increasing equitable access to quality education (\$370.6m)

**c. Comments on Project Cost, Financing and Dates**

The ICR did not provide actual costs for the entire Primary Education Development Program (\$2039.5 m), but only on the IDA credit. For this \$90.1m was disbursed against \$ 150 m committed at appraisal. The lower actual costs were a result of significantly lower construction costs, devaluation of the Taka, and exchange rate fluctuations of SDR/USD. For the overall PEDP the government committed \$ 1668.7 towards the total costs of \$2039.5 at appraisal (including \$1297.8 in recurrent costs), but only the direct spending for activities covered in the IDA credit -- \$39 m spent compared to \$33.8 m estimated at appraisal -- were accounted for in the ICR. The project closed on schedule on 12/30/2003.

**3. Achievement of Relevant Objectives:**

Originally conceived as a subsector wide program, many of the qualitative /quantitative targets planned were ambitious. While we have little information in the ICR about the achievements of the overall program (that included other donor sponsored and GOB projects), available information mostly on the credit, indicated that the overall objectives were partially achieved as follows :

- i) **Improve school quality and system efficiency** -- A National assessment on the learning achievements of children was carried out only once (against three planned) and indicated only about 25% of children had achieved "near mastery" of basic items in language (Bangla), mathematics, science and social studies, against the 85% planned on roughly comparable measures. Completion rates of the poorest children deteriorated to 56% against the targeted 72%, and there was little change in the primary cycle cost, with a child taking an average of 7.5 years to complete

primary school. Forty seven percent of teachers from both government and private schools were trained and certified versus only 10% at project start.

**ii) Sustainable, cost effective and better managed education system** -- capacity building of education personnel at the national level in monitoring and evaluation, management and analysis had suboptimal results due to the mismatch of training content, trainees and functional responsibilities. The education management information system (EMIS) was considerably improved (by DFID) with better quality data and collection practices, which unfortunately have not yet led to effective planning and management of the primary education subsector.

**iii) Universal coverage and equitable access to quality primary schooling** -- The targeted net enrolment ratio of 95% was almost met (national and IDA supported areas achieved 85%) with gender parity maintained. Project supported physical works (including tube wells and toilets for girls), block grants to schools and social mobilization helped generate the increased demand for schooling.

#### 4. Significant Outcomes/Impacts:

Several policy actions were implemented by the project resulting in :

- Training and certification of teachers from registered nongovernmental schools and subventions to such schools for teacher salaries (40% of primary schools in Bangladesh are nongovernmental).
- Increased instructional time (doubled in grades 3-5) and improved teacher student ratios from 1:60 to 1:40.
- More efficient allocation of education resources, i.e., textbook reuse policy, school construction based on needs, targeted subsidies to underserved rural communities (e.g., 1.5 m poorest children received free stationery) to increase enrolment.
- Institution of a national curriculum in all primary schools.
- Project design used student learning achievement as indicator of school quality and one national assessment was undertaken.
- Modest degree of capacity building achieved at district and subdistrict levels in planning, budgeting and implementation of education activities.
- The physical works ably carried out by the Local Government Engineering Department (160 new schools, 6000 new classrooms, 3500 schools repaired, and 10,000 toilets and 4800 tube wells installed) contributed much to the improvement of the learning environment, and demand for schooling.

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

- Project design was still overly ambitious even with scaled down targets after GOB rejected the original programmatic approach. This was despite the known poor implementation capacity of GOB, identified as a risk in the PAD. Not only was the design complex with GOB having to coordinate and sequence a total of 27 discrete projects with activities interdependent on one another, many of the physical targets in learning achievements and education efficiency were clearly unachievable.
- Frequent changes of key personnel in Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (MOPME), including 4 different secretaries and 5 different project directors negatively affected project implementation.
- Project management, procurement and financial management remained weak despite training efforts due to staff turnovers.
- Highly centralized and inordinate delays in decision making delayed all aspects of project implementation (most importantly, the nonrecruitment of teacher training instructors for 2 years).
- Only one of the planned three national assessments was undertaken and its results were not easily comparable to project indicators. Little GOB commitment to this undertaking is evident, since no follow-up work is scheduled and the assessment team has been disbanded.
- The improved EMIS system did not lead to timely analysis of data/information nor corrective management action.

6. Ratings:	ICR	OED Review	Reason for Disagreement /Comments
<b>Outcome:</b>	Satisfactory	Moderately Satisfactory	There was only partial achievement of major project objectives and a number of significant shortcomings, as noted in Section 5. This warrants a "Moderately Satisfactory" rating (which does not exist under the ICR's 4-point scale)
<b>Institutional Dev.:</b>	Modest	Modest	
<b>Sustainability:</b>	Likely	Likely	
<b>Bank Performance:</b>	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	
<b>Borrower Perf.:</b>	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	
<b>Quality of ICR:</b>		Satisfactory	

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

#### 7. Lessons of Broad Applicability:

- A programmatic approach should ensure that there is sufficient political commitment by the borrower to this

modality and a clear agreement on development objectives . Likelihood of succes is enhanced when there is adequate institutional capacity, clear agreement among the development partners and between the government and development partners on objectives and intervention modalities, and a strong M&E system .

- Government commitment to systematic data collection and utilization of this data for timely policy and corrective intervention is fundamental to the success of any project .
- High transaction costs associated with coordination of many discrete but interdependent projects cannot be underestimated.

**8. Assessment Recommended?**  Yes  No

**Why?** This is a good example of a subsector-wide project with multiple donors than can provide many important lessons about the challenges of such strategies . It would be useful to frame the lessons not only from the Bank's perspective but from that of the many partners as well .

**9. Comments on Quality of ICR:**

The ICR is of overall satisfactory quality . However it could have gone beyond its assessment of the sole IDA credit, given the project was designed to be subsector wide, and the interdependency of the activities among the different discrete projects. More information (beyond annexes) could have been provided on the outcomes of the other projects (and their financial disbursements ) as they cumulatively determined the success of the government's Primary Education Development Program . Inclusion of comments from other key donors would also have been appropriate.