



<b>1. Project Data:</b>		<b>Date Posted :</b> 06/10/2002	
<b>PROJ ID:</b> P006938		<b>Appraisal</b>	<b>Actual</b>
<b>Project Name:</b> Cr/basic Education	<b>Project Costs (US\$M)</b>	61.5	61.5
<b>Country:</b> Costa Rica	<b>Loan/Credit (US\$M)</b>	23.0	22.62
<b>Sector(s):</b> Board: ED - Primary education (66%), Tertiary education (17%), Central government administration (7%), Sub-national government administration (7%), Secondary education (3%)	<b>Cofinancing (US\$M)</b>	28.0	28.0
<b>L/C Number:</b> L3414			
	<b>Board Approval (FY)</b>		91
<b>Partners involved :</b> IADB	<b>Closing Date</b>	12/31/1997	09/30/2000
<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 Project aimed to (i) improve the quality, efficiency and relevance of basic education (grades 1-9) with special focus on disadvantaged rural and marginal urban communities; (ii) strengthen the capacity of the Ministry of Education to plan and manage the education sector; and (iii) support improvements in secondary education.

**b. Components**  
The three major components were: (a) improvement in the quality of basic education through curriculum revision, the production and distribution of student textbooks, workbooks, teacher manuals, classroom instructional materials including school libraries, in-service training and upgrading of teachers, and improvements of physical infrastructure and facilities in the most disadvantaged areas; (b) strengthening of sector planning and management through investments in equipment, staff development and establishment of an effective management information system; and the development of a student achievement testing and evaluation system; and (c) improvement in the quality of secondary education through an evaluation of the status and needs in the secondary education sub-sector, and a two phase pilot program in 20 secondary schools supported by a provision of microcomputers and software, new curricula, and training for school principals and central and regional supervisors.

**c. Comments on Project Cost, Financing and Dates**  
The project was financed by World Bank (37%), Inter American Development Bank (IDB) (46%) and the Government of Costa Rica (17%). At the original closing date (December 31,1997) only 57% of the loan had been disbursed, due to considerable delay in implementation during the first two years. A loan extension was approved by the World Bank (1998-2000), at the close of which implementation was completed and the loan fully disbursed.

**3. Achievement of Relevant Objectives:**  
The major objectives of the project were achieved. With respect to the quality of education, new curricula for grades 1-9, educational materials including textbooks, supplementary materials, and distance education materials were provided. Rural and urban schools with low social development indexes were among the first to receive educational materials; however, there were delays in supplying books to nearly inaccessible rural areas. This was accomplished between 1998-2000; whereas delivery to all other schools had been completed by 1997. Teacher Accreditation and Specialization programs have been successful with most teachers trained at the university level. In-sevice teacher training targets were exceeded (310%), and 99% of the target for multigrade teacher training was

attained. Infrastructure targets were achieved or surpassed. With respect to the construction or replacement of classrooms, achievement was 269% . In terms of student achievement, at the basic education level, there have been encouraging trends nation wide. Scores on standardized tests in 2000 indicate considerable improvement compared with 1989 provincial test score, although the large increments may be due to differences in methodology in the tests. For example in 1989 only 36% of students in grades 4-6 received passing grades in Spanish and mathematics, in 2000, up to 94 % of students passed in the highest performing province. Although, there may be improvement on test scores nation-wide, there is little evidence to show that there has been an appreciable impact in terms of learning outcomes in the most disadvantaged areas. Promotion rates showed a decline at grades 1-6 in all but one province, and at grades 7-9, 3 of the 7 provinces showed improvement ranging from 3- 14%. Repetition rates declined by approximately 4% in grades 1-6, and 6% in grades 7-9; however, in Canas there was a significant increase of 12% in grades 7-9. Puriscal had a 6% increase. Attrition rates decreased from 19% in 1989 to 12 % in grades 7-9; however, they increased from 2- 4% in grades 1-6. These indicators suggest that there is need for greater analysis of factors which contribute to low performance, in an effort to design and implement more effective interventions. There was some improvement in planning and management capabilities, as measured by reduced delays in personnel administrative processes and delivery of services; and improvements in secondary education. The computer-assisted education pilot program installed 26 laboratories in 20 secondary schools. It was positively assessed and generalized to over 80% of secondary schools, and the secondary education assessments served as the basis for curricular revisions, a 16% reduction in the subjects taught. Recommendations of the secondary education sector assessment have been incorporated into the secondary education reform planning, and provided input into the IDB supported Lower Secondary Education Project.

**4. Significant Outcomes/Impacts:**

The development of instructional materials exceeded targets with respect to textbooks (134%) and teacher guides (1168%): 379,688 teacher guides for the core subjects were provided compared with 32,500 programmed. Despite delays, a wider range of teaching and learning materials are now available in the majority of basic education schools including previously neglected multi-grade rural schools. Overall output targets for in service teacher training were met or exceeded: 99% of multi-grade teachers were trained and in-service courses tripled the target. Project financed training courses have been incorporated into a distance education program. An institutionalized system for student testing and evaluation, within the Quality Control Department of the MOE was successfully established, standardized tests were integrated with revised curriculum objectives, and all programmed goals were met or exceeded. Studies conducted on secondary education have been integrated into a policy framework. Following successful implementation of the computer assisted education pilot, 166 of the 206 secondary schools have access to computer technology and appropriate curriculum and pedagogical support.

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

Considerable implementation delay necessitated an extension of 21 months. The delays can be attributed to inadequate assessment of project management capacity for implementing the proposed project during preparation, failure to establish a computerized financial management system before project launch, limited counterpart funds during the economic crisis 1996/97, weak decisionmaking during the election period, and change in administration 1997/98. A more proactive stance, intensified supervision, and continuity in task management staff might have speeded up the implementation process during the initial years of slow implementation. There were delays in getting resources ( textbooks and other educational materials) to the most disadvantaged areas.

6. Ratings:	ICR	OED Review	Reason for Disagreement /Comments
<b>Outcome:</b>	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	
<b>Institutional Dev.:</b>	Substantial	Substantial	
<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:**

- Adequate time and resources should be allocated for educational reform activities which involve integration and coordination of programs and units.
- Continuity of project implementation staff, particularly during changes in administration, is critical for ensuring the

pace and effectiveness of implementation remains satisfactory.

-Bank supervision teams should include both technical and administrative staff to ensure that borrowers have the knowledge necessary to implement Bank procedures (procurement, disbursement etc) as well as carry out sectoral activities.

-In socioeconomically deprived areas, in depth analysis of factors which negatively impact school attendance and learning achievement, and demand-side interventions (such as financial support to poor families, social programs for at risk youth) should be included to optimize investments in school infrastructure and educational materials.

-Special attention and logical support need to be given to delivery of resources in inaccessible areas.

**8. Assessment Recommended?**  Yes  No

**Why?** No education projects have been assessed in Costa Rica before . The implementation experiences in this country may provide useful lessons for dissemination .

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

The ICR presents a fairly detailed analysis of the process from design through implementation; however, given the project's focus on disadvantaged areas, the ICR ought to have included comparative data on student achievement in the targeted areas, with an analysis of the factors which contributed to the outcomes.