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IMPLEMENTATION COMPLETION AND RESULTS REPORT  
(IDA-37520 TF-51873)

ON A

CREDIT

IN THE AMOUNT OF SDR 101.4 MILLION

(US\$138.76 MILLION EQUIVALENT)

TO THE

SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM

FOR A

PRIMARY EDUCATION FOR DISADVANTAGED CHILDREN PROJECT

June 29, 2011

Human Development Sector Unit  
East Asia and Pacific Region

## CURRENCY EQUIVALENTS

(Exchange Rate Effective June 2011)

Currency Unit = Viet Nam Dong (VND)

1.00 VND = US\$0.000048

US\$ 1.00 = 20,713.62 VND

## FISCAL YEAR ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AusAID	Australian Agency for International Development
BoET	Bureaus of Education and Training
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CPRGS	Comprehensive Poverty Reduction and Growth Strategy
CSF	Campus Support Fund
DCDS	District Community Development Specialist
DEE	Department of Ethnic Education of the MOET
DFA	District FSQLAudit
DFID	Department for International Development
DoET	Departments of Education and Training
DPF	Department of Planning and Finance of the MOET
ECEDC	Early Childhood Education for Disadvantaged Children Project (proposed)
EFA	Education for All
EIESI	Exemplary Inclusive Education Services Initiative
EMIS	Education Management Information System
EC	European Commission
FII	FSQL Input Index
FMS	Financial Management System
FSQL	Fundamental School Quality Level
IE	Inclusive Education
IPAP	Indigenous Peoples' Action Plan
IST	Institutional Strengthening Team
IT	InformationTechnology
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
MDG	Millenium Development Agency
MDTF	Multi-Donor Trust Fund
MOET	Ministry of Education and Training
MOH	Ministry of Health
MPI	Ministry of Planning and Investment
MTR	Mid-Term Review
NGO	Non Governmental Agency
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for Development
NTP-E	National Targeted Program for Education
ODA	Official Development Assistance
PC	Peoples' Committee
PCU	Project Coordination Unit

PED	Primary Education Department of the MOET
PEDC	Primary Education for Disadvantaged Children
PEP	Primary Education Project
PIP	Project Implementation Plan
PMR	Project Management Report
PPCU	Provincial Project Coordination Unit
PTA	Parent-Teachers' Associations
SCF	Save the Children Fund
SDP	School Development Plan
SEQAP	School Education Quality Assurance Project
SR	School Readiness Programs
TA	Teaching assistant
TBS-EFA	Total Budget Support for Education for All Project
TVET	Technical and Vocational Programs
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UPE	Universal Primary Education
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VLSS	Vietnam Living Standards Survey
VND	Viet Nam Dong

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**VIETNAM**  
**Primary Education for Disadvantaged Children Project**

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## Data Sheet

A. Basic Information			
Country:	Vietnam	Project Name:	Primary Education for Disadvantaged Children Project
Project ID:	P044803	L/C/TF Number(s):	IDA-37520,TF-51873,TF-52939,TF-93411
ICR Date:	06/29/2011	ICR Type:	Core ICR
Lending Instrument:	SIL	Borrower:	Socialist Republic of Vietnam
Original Total Commitment:	USD 138.8M	Disbursed Amount:	USD 151.4M
Revised Amount:	USD 133.8M		
<b>Environmental Category: C</b>			
<b>Implementing Agencies:</b> Ministry of Education and Training			
<b>Cofinanciers and Other External Partners:</b> Department for International Development UK (DFID) Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) Australian Agency for International Development			

B. Key Dates				
Process	Date	Process	Original Date	Revised / Actual Date(s)
Concept Review:	11/30/2000	Effectiveness:	10/10/2003	10/10/2003
Appraisal:	10/11/2002	Restructuring(s):		12/28/2009
Approval:	05/06/2003	Mid-term Review:	12/31/2006	12/04/2006
		Closing:	12/31/2009	12/31/2010

C. Ratings Summary	
C.1 Performance Rating by ICR	
Outcomes:	Satisfactory
Risk to Development Outcome:	Moderate
Bank Performance:	Satisfactory
Borrower Performance:	Satisfactory

<b>C.2 Detailed Ratings of Bank and Borrower Performance (by ICR)</b>			
<b>Bank</b>	<b>Ratings</b>	<b>Borrower</b>	<b>Ratings</b>
Quality at Entry:	Satisfactory	Government:	Satisfactory
Quality of Supervision:	Highly Satisfactory	Implementing Agency/Agencies:	Satisfactory
<b>Overall Bank Performance:</b>	Satisfactory	<b>Overall Borrower Performance:</b>	Satisfactory

<b>C.3 Quality at Entry and Implementation Performance Indicators</b>			
<b>Implementation Performance</b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>QAG Assessments (if any)</b>	<b>Rating</b>
Potential Problem Project at any time (Yes/No):	No	Quality at Entry (QEA):	None
Problem Project at any time (Yes/No):	No	Quality of Supervision (QSA):	None
DO rating before Closing/Inactive status:	Satisfactory		

<b>D. Sector and Theme Codes</b>		
	<b>Original</b>	<b>Actual</b>
<b>Sector Code (as % of total Bank financing)</b>		
Central government administration	1	1
Pre-primary education	2	2
Primary education	97	97
<b>Theme Code (as % of total Bank financing)</b>		
Education for all	33	33
Other social development	17	17
Rural services and infrastructure	17	17
Social risk mitigation	33	33

<b>E. Bank Staff</b>		
<b>Positions</b>	<b>At ICR</b>	<b>At Approval</b>
Vice President:	James W. Adams	Jemal ud-din Kassum
Country Director:	Victoria Kwakwa	Klaus Rohland
Sector Director	Emmanuel Y. Jimenez	Emmanuel Y. Jimenez
Sector Manager:	Eduardo Velez Bustillo	Christopher J. Thomas
Project Team Leader:	Binh Thanh Vu	Christopher J. Thomas
ICR Team Leader:	Binh Thanh Vu	
ICR Primary Author:	Suzana N. de Campos Abbott	

## F. Results Framework Analysis

### Project Development Objectives (from Project Appraisal Document)

The objective of the Project is to improve access to primary school and the quality of education for disadvantaged girls and boys. Disadvantaged children are broadly defined as school-aged children who are not enrolled or are at risk of not completing their primary education; children who attend schools that do not meet fundamental quality standards; and disabled children or children from other highly vulnerable groups, such as street children, migrant children or girls in certain ethnic minority areas.

### Revised Project Development Objectives (as approved by original approving authority)

N/A

#### (a) PDO Indicator(s)

Indicator	Baseline Value	Original Target Values (from approval documents)	Formally Revised Target Values	Actual Value Achieved at Completion or Target Years
<b>Indicator 1 :</b>	Increase in number of PEDC schools reaching FSQL.			
Value quantitative or Qualitative)	54%	participating school achieve FSQL	N/A	68,3%
Date achieved	11/30/2004	06/05/2003	11/30/2006	11/30/2010
Comments (incl. % achievement)	the PDO achieved			
<b>Indicator 2 :</b>	Increase net enrollment rate			
Value quantitative or Qualitative)	81%	96%	N/A	98,7%
Date achieved	12/30/1999	06/05/2003	11/30/2006	12/31/2010
Comments (incl. % achievement)	the PDO achieved			
<b>Indicator 3 :</b>	Improve primary student completion.			
Value quantitative or Qualitative)	72%	86%	N/A	94,1%
Date achieved	12/30/1999	06/05/2003	11/30/2006	12/31/2010
Comments (incl. % achievement)	the PDO achieved			
<b>Indicator 4 :</b>	Reduce Grade 1 repetition rate.			
Value quantitative or Qualitative)	8%	3%	N/A	5,2%
Date achieved	12/30/1999	06/05/2003	11/30/2006	12/31/2010

Comments (incl. % achievement)	This indicator fell short of its target due to a new campaign launched by the MOET two years ago to address a problem where teachers apparently passed all of their students to higher grades. (primary repetition rates stood at 2% for PEDC)			
<b>Indicator 5 :</b>	Reduce dropout rate.			
Value quantitative or Qualitative)	12%	4%	N/A	2,5%
Date achieved	12/30/1999	06/05/2003	11/30/2006	12/31/2010
Comments (incl. % achievement)	The DPO achieved			

**(b) Intermediate Outcome Indicator(s)**

Indicator	Baseline Value	Original Target Values (from approval documents)	Formally Revised Target Values	Actual Value Achieved at Completion or Target Years
<b>Indicator 1 :</b>	Schools serving the most educationally disadvantaged children in the country are better prepared for success			
Value (quantitative or Qualitative)	N/A	189 of the most educationally disadvantaged districts plan for and achieve FSQI in all schools and satellite campuses.	N/A	All systems for data collection, analysis and planning are in place and operative not only for PEDC districts but nationwide
Date achieved	12/30/1999	06/05/2003	11/30/2006	12/31/2010
Comments (incl. % achievement)	the IO is overachieved			
<b>Indicator 2 :</b>	Professional development provided to teachers, head teachers.			
Value (quantitative or Qualitative)	59,000 teachers and head teachers in over	4,200 core school sites and almost 15,000 satellite sites	N/A	63,680 teachers have received subject-based training. 95,000 teachers received 5 days of training in Vietnamese Language Strengthening for Ethnic Minorities
Date achieved	12/30/1999	06/05/2003	11/30/2006	12/31/2010
Comments (incl. % achievement)				

<b>Indicator 3 :</b> Teaching assistants hired and trained				
Value (quantitative or Qualitative)	N/A	Approximately 15,000 teaching assistants hired and trained	N/A	7,500 teaching assistants and 7,500 Grade 1 teachers trained
Date achieved	11/30/2004	10/30/2003	11/30/2006	12/31/2010
Comments (incl. % achievement)				
<b>Indicator 4 :</b> School infrastructure improved				
Value (quantitative or Qualitative)	N/A	At least 9,240 satellite campuses are rehabilitated with permanent classrooms and upgraded facilities,	N/A	13,141 new classrooms were built at satellite campuses and 6,720 classrooms were renovated at both satellite campuses and main schools
Date achieved	11/30/2004	06/05/2003	11/30/2006	12/31/2010
Comments (incl. % achievement)				
<b>Indicator 5 :</b> School-community linkages are strengthened				
Value (quantitative or Qualitative)	N/A	School-community linkages are strengthened in about 15,000 school campuses.	N/A	Parent Teacher Associations have been established at all schools/satellite campuses and functioning in 99% of the locations
Date achieved	11/30/2004	06/05/2003	11/30/2006	12/31/2010
Comments (incl. % achievement)				
<b>Indicator 6 :</b> Textbooks provided to students and full set of training materials provided to teachers				
Value (quantitative or Qualitative)	N/A	Nearly 40,000 satellite teachers will have a full set of teaching materials and 1,390,000 students Math and Vietnamese textbooks at the start of each school year.	N/A	259,062 teacher textbooks, manuals or guides have been provided to teachers, and 3,397,429 textbooks were provided to students.

Date achieved	11/30/2004	06/05/2003	11/30/2006	12/31/2010
Comments (incl. % achievement)				

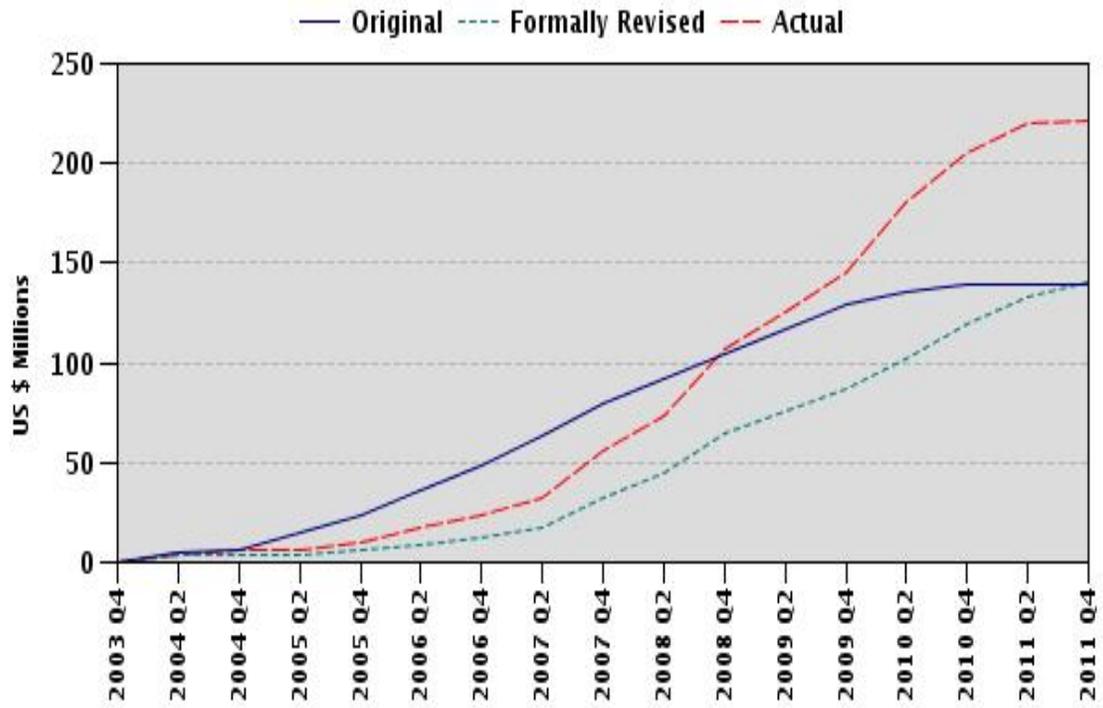
### G. Ratings of Project Performance in ISRs

No.	Date ISR Archived	DO	IP	Actual Disbursements (USD millions)
1	06/27/2003	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	0.00
2	12/3/2003	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	0.00
3	06/15/2004	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	4.00
4	12/16/2004	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	4.11
5	06/09/2005	Satisfactory	Moderately Satisfactory	6.82
6	01/09/2006	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	8.13
7	07/06/2006	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	12.12
8	03/27/2007	Moderately Satisfactory	Moderately Satisfactory	26.63
9	06/21/2007	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	30.84
10	01/11/2008	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	46.87
11	07/29/2008	Satisfactory	Moderately Satisfactory	66.27
12	01/23/2009	Moderately Satisfactory	Moderately Satisfactory	80.01
13	06/18/2009	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	87.37
14	01/08/2010	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	111.55
15	01/01/2011	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	150.76

### H. Restructuring (if any)

Restructuring Date(s)	Board Approved DPO Change	ISR Rating at Restructuring		Amount Disbursed at Restructuring in USD millions	Reason for restructuring & key changes made
		DO	IP		
12/28/2009		S	S	109.84	Closing Date Extension and Partial Cancellation

## I. Disbursement Profile





# 1. Project Context, Development Objectives and Design

## 1.1 Context at Appraisal

At the time of Appraisal of the Primary Education for Disadvantaged Children Project (the PEDC, the Project), Vietnam had made excellent progress in the development of its education system. In the previous ten years, it had met ambitious targets set through its Education for All (EFA) program, raising net enrollment rates at the primary level from about 80-86% in 1990/91 to nearly 94% in 1999/2000. It had also shown good improvement in a number of its internal efficiency indicators, such as repetition and dropout rates.

Despite this progress, Vietnam continued to face important challenges in its education system. Approximately 7% of the primary school aged population had never attended school and many more dropped out before completing primary. A large number of minority children repeated grades or were unable to pass the entry exam for lower secondary, reflecting a lower than acceptable level of academic performance for these children. There were major differences between progress in urban areas and in rural and remote areas. The national criteria for universal primary education (UPE) was such that only 70% of 14 year-old students were required to have completed primary education in the most disadvantaged areas, compared to the more than 80% required in advantaged areas. Many of the children in the most disadvantaged areas were provided a shorter primary school curriculum over a five-year period. The situation was complicated by a financing system that did not fully acknowledge the needs of disadvantaged children: annual per pupil expenditure on education for children in Hanoi was more than twice as high as expenditure for children in the poor province of Soc Trang. Per capita expenditures for children in the wealthiest income quintile were two and one half times the expenditures for children in the poorest income quintile. Finally, a reliance on user charges favored children of richer households.

The Government of Vietnam had acknowledged and made a commitment to universal, high quality basic education for all in its education law, poverty alleviation programs, 2010 Education Strategy, and Comprehensive Poverty Reduction and Growth Strategy. The Government had set, and largely achieved, a target of allocating 20% of the national budget to education, and had channeled significant funds from the education budget to nationally targeted programs in poor areas. The National Targeted Program on Education (NTP-E), one of eleven National Targeted Programs<sup>1</sup>, was intended to support the achievement of Vietnam's 2010 Education Strategy and its EFA goals and targets for improved access, quality and efficiency in education services. Support for the education of ethnic minorities and in disadvantaged regions was one of the subcomponents (Subcomponent 5) of the NTP-E. Yet, a serious financing gap still existed in disadvantaged areas, and there was an identified need to meet the physical, instructional material and training needs in more than 4,000 schools and 14,000 teaching sites that were below basic standards and received little or no investment support. While the country had met its initial UPE goals of 80% net enrollment in 90% of communes, two large challenges remained: the problems of reaching outstanding communes and the un-reached children needed to be addressed, and the educational quality of the overall system needed improvement to allow it to progressively approach and ultimately meet national and international quality standards. At the ten-year review of its EFA program, Vietnam recognized that there were still many children left behind by the primary system, and that failing to educate all children and failing to educate them to an adequate level of quality would put the Government's plans for UPE, economic growth and poverty reduction at risk.

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<sup>1</sup> National Targeted Programs are a state budget facility that provide sector-specific frameworks for planning and implementing strategic interventions, and act as focus points to attract community participation and NGO and official donor contributions.

## **1.2 Original Project Development Objectives (PDO) and Key Indicators (as approved)**

The objective of the PEDC was to improve access to primary school and the quality of education for disadvantaged girls and boys. Disadvantaged children were broadly defined as school-aged children who were not enrolled or were at risk of not completing primary education; children who attended schools that did not meet fundamental quality standards; and disabled children or children from other highly vulnerable groups, such as street children, migrant children or girls in certain ethnic minority areas.

The majority of PEDC resources were to be targeted to 189 districts, where approximately 70% of Vietnam's educationally disadvantaged children resided. In those districts, by the end of the Project (originally estimated for 2009), the following targets were to be met:

- 4,272 core primary school sites and 14,902 satellite sites would have achieved "fundamental school quality level" (FSQL);
- Primary net enrollment would have improved from 81% in 1999 to 96%;
- Primary student completion (as measured by the G5/G1 ratio) would have increased from 72% in 1999 to 86%;
- Primary repetition would have fallen from 8% in 1999 to less than 3%;
- Primary school dropout would have been reduced from 12% in 1999 to less than 4%; and
- Student achievement, as measured by Grade 5 tests in Mathematics and Vietnamese, would show an upward trend.

In addition, by project completion:

- National guidelines would have been developed and applied effectively to provide education to children with disabilities and highly vulnerable children, and for using FSQL as a first step in achieving national standards;
- The number of children with disabilities in school would have increased;
- Children with disabilities, street children, minority girls and other very high risk groups of children throughout the country would have benefited from expanded and innovative approaches to education service delivery; and
- MOET, and participating DoETs and BoETs, would have regularly demonstrated strengthened capacity to identify, plan for, support, and monitor the needs of educationally disadvantaged children.

## **1.3 Revised PDO (as approved by original approving authority) and Key Indicators, and reasons/justification**

The Project's Development Objectives were not revised.

## **1.4 Main Beneficiaries**

The Project's target population comprised two groups of disadvantaged children:

- Primary school-aged children from the 189 most educationally disadvantaged districts; and
- Disabled children of primary school age and other highly vulnerable groups, such as street and working children, children living in fishing communities, etc.

The disadvantaged children targeted by the Project included those who still did not have access to primary education or who were at risk of receiving an inadequate primary education, including: (a) school aged children who did not attend primary school; (b) children at school who were at risk of repeating or dropping out; and (c) children at school who were not able to achieve the level of learning to ensure a solid foundation of basic skills and to successfully access secondary education. The absolute number of children in these categories was estimated to exceed two million, and possibly even three million.

Approximately 70% of economically disadvantaged children lived in the 189 districts included under the Project (out of 615 total districts in Vietnam). The 189 districts were in remote or underdeveloped regions, and comprised: (a) a total of 2.7 million students, or 27% of all students in Vietnam; (b) one million ethnic minority students; (c) 1.1 million poor students; and (d) 1.2 million students enrolled in satellite sites or multi-grade classes.

In addition, the Project's beneficiaries were to include disabled school-aged children (there were an estimated one million in Vietnam, over 70% of which did not have access to school), and children who lived in difficult social conditions, such as street children, working children, children of migrants, children from fishing communities, girls from certain ethnic minority groups, and those from broken homes, all of which were considered less likely to access, participate and perform well in primary school.

The Project was also expected to yield significant long-term benefits to the education system as a whole, including: (a) the adoption of a minimum service standard that, together with periodic evaluations of learning achievement, could serve as a measure of educational progress for all campuses across the nation; (b) the development of national guidelines for targeting resources and delivering services to disabled and other vulnerable children; and (c) community-based and decentralized implementation.

### **1.5 Original Components (as approved)**

The Project comprised four components, as described below.

#### **Component 1: Achieving Fundamental School Quality Levels (FSQL) (US\$227.73 million)**

This component sought to raise all schools in the 189 most disadvantaged targeted districts to a *fundamental school quality level* through a two-pronged approach: (a) by providing necessary support to district administration to improve planning, management and monitoring capabilities, in order to develop and implement plans to meet FSQL standards; and (b) by enhancing school capacity to provide effective instruction at poorly resourced satellite campuses, meeting the specific needs of educationally disadvantaged children and supporting other efforts to meet FSQL standards in those classrooms.

Sub-Component 1.1: FSQL District Management (US\$7.07 million) supported the institutional capacity of targeted districts (BoET) to plan and manage educational services and support schools and their satellites to reach FSQL standards by: (a) strengthening district school data collection systems (including an initial physical inventory of all schools and satellite campuses to guide planning for civil works and requirements for classroom inputs) and implement a monitoring and evaluation system to assess progress towards FSQL goals and educational outcomes; and (b) support the development of a consultative annual district-wide FSQL action plan that outlines the requirements for all schools in the district to reach fundamental quality levels and serves as a tool for planning and school-support purposes.

Sub-Component 1.2: Instructional Improvement and Teacher Support for FSQL (US\$44.24 million) provided targeted districts with FSQL grants to implement their district-wide FSQL action plan. Grants to districts would be made by provinces on a contract basis, and managed according to guidelines that were specified in the Project's Operations Manual. Within the district, resources would only be provided to teaching sites that were below FSQL standards, most of which were satellite campuses. These interventions strived to address and meet the pedagogical needs of disadvantaged children. Funds could be allocated to support the procurement or provision of a variety of interventions, according to specifications laid out in their district-wide FSQL plan, including: (a) teacher guides, materials and training modules that would encourage and support instructional methods adapted to the needs of educationally disadvantaged children, such as Vietnamese language strengthening, multi-grade education or mainstreaming of disabled children; (b) professional development workshops to support teachers in acquiring new methodologies to address the pedagogical needs of educationally disadvantaged children, as well as satellite teacher certification upgrading to the minimum 9+3 FSQL standard for classroom instruction; (c) a basic package of teaching-learning materials; (d) establishment of community-based pre-primary school readiness language development programs to strengthen children's Vietnamese competency levels in locations with a significant proportion of ethnic minorities; and (e) placement of

local community lower-secondary graduates as teaching assistants to support classroom instructors in satellite sites to provide more individualized attention to children with special needs (initially, on a pilot basis).

Sub-Component 1.3: Infrastructure Development for FSQL (*US\$163.61 million*) sought to improve the physical environment for learning in school satellites serving disadvantaged children. The Project was to upgrade the infrastructure in an estimated 8,500 existing schools sites, providing for construction of classrooms plus an office, water points and latrines. Standard building designs were to accommodate the needs of handicapped children.

Sub-Component 1.4: Community Participation and Student Support for FSQL and Universal Primary Education (*US\$12.81 million*) sought to strengthen parents' associations at satellite campus locations to advocate for universal primary education goals as well as to support and monitor FSQL standards. With the assistance of a District Community Development Specialist (DCDS), parents would be mobilized and trained to manage a Campus Support Fund (CSF, budgeted and accounted for through the District FSQL grant, but managed at the school level) that could be allocated to a variety of activities, such as school feeding programs, extracurricular activities that promote participation of under-represented groups or remedial education classes. This activity was to be piloted in the 800 schools and satellite campuses in the worst off districts for two years and then expanded if successful.

## **Component 2: Education Initiatives for Highly Vulnerable Children** (*US\$4.15 million*)

This Component sought to address the needs of children at high risk through two streams of interventions that addressed the education needs of: (a) disabled children; and (b) vulnerable groups, such as street and working children, children living in fishing communities, and others.

Sub-Component 2.1: Inclusive Education for Disabled Children (*US\$2.26 million*) was designed to support a national Task Force to develop an integrated set of national guidelines for inclusive education that ensured disabled children could gain access to educational services and to improve teachers' pedagogical capacity to meet the needs of children with disabilities in the classroom. Activities included: (a) development of a comprehensive set of national guidelines addressing the needs and constraints faced by primary schools attempting to adopt an inclusive education policy, including recommendations of an organizational structure to support the needs of disabled students; (b) implementation of a survey and research that scoped the dimension and variation of the educational issues faced by disabled children, profiled their educational needs, identified the barriers they faced in completing primary education and recommended appropriate strategies and approaches for the provision of inclusive primary educational services to them; (c) development of teacher guides and modules and provision of training workshops for educators that could assist in the mainstreaming of children with disabilities; (d) development of public awareness materials to mobilize parents to enroll disabled children in their local primary school, if appropriate, and assist head teachers and district officers to mobilize communities to provide a supportive environment for them; and (e) procurement of materials and equipment to support disabled children, based on the recommendations of the Task Force on the organizational structure and the result of the needs analyses.

Sub-Component 2.2: Reaching Street and Working Children and Other High-Risk Groups (*US\$1.89 million*) was designed to support a national Task Force to develop and enabling environment for the education of vulnerable groups and the implementation of innovative approaches to the education of these groups, through provision of innovation grants for vulnerable groups, on a competitive basis, to government agencies and NGOs that served at-risk children. Based on lessons from these grants, recommendations and guidelines would be developed to improve educational services for highly vulnerable children.

### **Component 3: National and Provincial Institutional and Technical Support for FSQL (US\$8.17 million)**

This Component sought to assist the MOET to lay down a pathway for reaching national school standards using FSQL as a first step, proposing FSQL criteria and raising awareness at all levels of the education system about how to bring every school up to FSQL levels.

Sub-Component 3.1: National Guidelines for FSQL (US\$0.44 million) was designed to support a National Quality Standards Task Force to develop and disseminate FSQL standards and guidelines for implementation. The Task Force would periodically review and revise FSQL standards according to evolving Government plans and actual progress towards meeting FSQL. As schools achieved FSQL, the Task Force could recommend raising incrementally FSQL standards until they gradually approached national standards.

Sub-Component 3.2: Institutional Strengthening (US\$7.73 million) was designed to provide technical assistance to support MOET and provincial Departments of Education and Training (DoETs) to develop instruments and processes to achieve FSQL. Assistance would also be provided to MOET to bolster the five institutional strengthening teams responsible for: (a) strengthening planning and monitoring of educational quality—including harmonizing district-level school data collection efforts with the national Education Management Information System (EMIS) and carrying out analytical studies to increase sector wide effectiveness and efficiency; (b) supporting teacher development activities and back-stopping of Vietnamese language strengthening programs for non-Vietnamese speakers; (c) procuring and distributing educational goods and materials that would address the need of educationally disadvantaged children; (d) monitoring and supervision of all civil works; and (e) mobilizing and supporting community participation in education for highly vulnerable children. Technical assistance was also to be provided to the DoETs to strengthen capacity for procurement and financial management at that level.

The institutional strengthening teams were expected to play a coordinating role, generate new knowledge, and provide overall leadership and direction in project implementation. However, most activities were to be carried out by existing departments in the MOET, DoETs and district-level Bureaus of Education and Training (BoETs). The teams' role would include maintaining a focus on the innovations introduced in the Project, including those related to gender, targeting resources to satellite schools, Vietnamese language instruction, addressing the educational needs of minorities, and community participation.

### **Component 4: Project Management (US\$3.62 million)**

This Component was designed to support the establishment of a Project Coordination Unit (PCU) inside the MOET, attached to the Primary Education Department (PED). The PCU would be staffed with members from various departments of the MOET, domestic and international consultants, and would support MOET line agencies, the institutional strengthening teams (Component 3) and the National Task Forces for Quality Standards, Disabled Children and Highly Vulnerable Children.

#### **1.6 Revised Components**

The Components were not revised, especially since the Project's design was flexible, and encouraged creativity at all levels as a means of achieving FSQL. During the Mid-Term Review (MTR) the Bank agreed to the following:

- Development and implementation of School Development Plans (SDP), in addition to the contemplated district and consolidated provincial plans that had been contemplated since a need had been identified for a development/planning function at the school level;
- Completion of several activities such as data analysis, report writing and follow up analysis of findings of the *Study in Grade 5 Student Achievement in Mathematics and Vietnamese Language*

*in the 2006-2007 School Year* that had been initiated under the Bank-financed Primary Teacher Development Project<sup>2</sup>.

- Development and implementation of the Exemplary Inclusive Education Services Initiative (EIESI), putting into practice a demonstrative element of the IE policy;
- The carrying out of several evaluations of initiatives that had been carried out under the Project;
- Integration of the Child Development Record with the District Financial Audit (DFA); and
- Consolidation of separate policies for IE and highly vulnerable children in a single policy document, strategy and national action plan for IE, including provision for highly vulnerable children.

The number of districts that benefited from the Project varied due to internal administrative changes that resulted in an increased number of districts in the 40 provinces that were targeted and not from an increase in the Project's scope.

### **1.7 Other significant changes**

As planned during Appraisal, the Project was co-financed by US\$51.5 million equivalent Multi-Donor Trust Fund (MDTF) (TF051873) dated July 14, 2003 between Vietnam and IDA, acting as Administrator of grant funds provided by the Governments of Australia (A\$1,485,000), Canada (C\$14,355,000), the Kingdom of Norway (NOK113,800,000)<sup>3</sup> and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (£24,700,000). A reallocation of funds from the MDTF was approved in June 2008, and the MDTF was amended in May 2009 to reflect a smaller than originally expected contribution from Norway and the addition of the income accrued to such contribution from time to time. The full financial contribution amounted to US\$70.35 million equivalent. The MDTF closed on December 31, 2009.

The IDA Credit Agreement was amended in May 2009 to reflect a change in the disbursement percentage for works and remove the limitation of the aggregate amount for procurement for small works by obtaining three quotations. The change in disbursement percentage allowed the Bank to disburse 100 percent against selected civil works contracts while others would be financed 100 percent under the Government's ongoing School Concretization Program, thereby facilitating disbursements.

Finally, in December 2009, a third order project restructuring was approved to extend the Credit's Closing Date by one year to December 31, 2010, to reallocate part of the proceeds across expenditure categories under the Credits, and to cancel a portion of the Credit (US\$5 million, or SDR 3,121,645 million equivalent). The restructuring reduced the Project's infrastructure component, allowing initiatives to meet school building needs to be met through the Government's School Concretization Program. It also provided continued funding for selected activities financed under the MDTF, thereby providing bridging mechanisms for the successful innovative interventions (e.g., FSQI Grants, including the DFA, training programs for community participation, small amounts for instructional materials, school consumables, in-service teacher training, Teaching Assistants (TA) and Inclusive Education (IE)) to be fully integrated into the Government's systems. In addition, an undisbursed amount of US\$43,219 was cancelled after the grace period for disbursements lapsed. Neither the Project's design, nor the PDO were modified.

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<sup>2</sup> Primary Teacher Development Project, Project Appraisal Document No. 20276-VN dated 11/14/2001.

<sup>3</sup> The total contribution to PEDC from the Kingdom of Norway at the end was less than the original commitment of approx. US\$ 3 million equivalent due to their budget limitations.

## 2. Key Factors Affecting Implementation and Outcomes

### 2.1 Project Preparation, Design and Quality at Entry

*Bank Engagement in Education.* Beginning with the Primary Education Project (PEP) in 1993, the Bank had adopted a comprehensive strategy of support for basic education through progressive engagement. At the time of the Project's approval, three education projects were under implementation, including the PEP, the Higher Education Project and the Primary Teachers Development Project, a co-financed operation that the Bank was leading. In addition, the Bank and other donors were building a cross-sectoral knowledge base that aimed to help the Government achieve its goals for basic education, including: (a) Government-Bank-Donor work on poverty reduction and development strategies; (b) a Public Expenditure Review that served to bring insight to public finance issues in education; (c) Government-Bank collaboration in assessment, curriculum, primary education development, and teacher development that served to create a strong foundation on which to build EFA/basic education strategies; and (d) Vietnam Living Standards Survey (VLSS)/LSMS and other surveys that would assist the MOET to better target resources and monitor progress.

*Alignment with Government and Bank priorities.* The Government had acknowledged and made a commitment to universal, high quality basic education for all in several Government plans and strategies described in Section 1.1, including its National EFA Action Plan, Socio-Economic Development Strategy (SEDS) 2001-2010, Comprehensive Poverty Reduction and Growth Strategy (CPRGS), Education Development Strategic Plan 2001-2010 and targets for the Millennium Development Goals. In all of these plans and strategies the Government recognized investment in primary education as the means to develop the fundamental skills and competencies necessary for economic growth and social development. The Government's 1999 Education Law provided that all children, regardless of area of residence, gender, socioeconomic background or ethnicity, were entitled to a full primary education. The Project was also fully aligned with the then current Country Assistance Strategy (CAS) goal of "making basic social services accessible and affordable for the poor".

*Lessons Learned.* The Project's design incorporated several lessons from extensive in-country experience related to the pedagogical and language needs of ethnic minority, disadvantage and disabled children under activities supported by donors as well as under the Ethnic Minority Education Component of the PEP. These lessons influenced the Project's focus on: (a) strengthening children's readiness for primary schooling; (b) supporting teachers in acquiring pedagogical skills suitable for instructional environments in isolated areas; (c) enhancing teachers' abilities to teach Vietnamese as a second language; and (d) boosting community and parental participating in schooling. The Project's school building activities were designed to follow the prototype models and decentralized management arrangements under the PEP and a Primary School Construction Project sponsored by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). Other activities under the Project such as the method for targeting resources and the community participation and CSF were designed to address specific issues that had been identified under analytical work on Vietnam's education sector that had identified a high degree of inequity in resources spent on education across the country, and as a result, high variation in student enrollment and achievement.

*Participatory Process.* The Project's design benefitted from a stakeholder analysis carried out under the PEP, incorporating views of primary teachers, head teachers, government officials, students, parents, out-of-school students, and donors. A participatory beneficiary assessment carried out during preparation was designed to provide input into the Project's design, the choice of specific interventions and implementation arrangements, to ensure that a pro-poor approach would be mainstreamed throughout the preparation process. The design of the Project's components, especially the CSF that aimed to strengthen ties between the satellite campus and the local community, and stimulate parental and community involvement, benefitted from inputs from the participatory beneficiary assessment.

*Project Design.* The Project was designed as a traditional investment project that provided incremental finance to a new program. It was to be implemented by the MOET, the DoETs and BoETs, and through

a Project Coordination Unit established in MOET. It was ambitious in design, especially since it would be implemented in and by 227<sup>4</sup> of the most educationally disadvantaged districts in 40 provinces; in most cases those with the most limited capacity. The Project's design envisaged activities to develop new programs and initiatives, and their subsequent implementation at the district/school level, but also an important program of capacity building so that provinces, districts and schools could plan, implement and monitor those activities appropriately, and promote institutional strengthening at all levels throughout the process.

The Project introduced the concept of FSQL that defined minimum institutional capacity, instructional materials and teacher support, physical infrastructure, and school-community linkages required to maintain a healthy and productive learning environment. FSQL was designed to be an "achievable" standard that schools in disadvantaged districts could aspire to achieve, as opposed to the national standards that were often considered excessively ambitious given their capacity and realities. The Project's design also encouraged innovation, and the piloting of selected activities before eventual roll out to all project districts. The CSF encouraged parent and community engagement, while ensuring that funds would be allocated to particular schools' and students' needs. The CSF, and the TAs were designed for piloting for two years, and only expanded to remaining districts, if they were proven to be successful.

*Risk Analysis.* The Project's risk analysis included an extensive list of factors that could come to affect the achievement of its objectives and expected outputs. While recognizing several risks relating to potential lack of institutional capacity to implement the Project at all levels, the risk analysis in retrospect perhaps underestimated the risks that the Government's complex procurement requirements with respect to civil works would come to present a particular challenge with respect to keeping an integrated project, that required concurrent delivery of an series of inputs, on schedule, and, also, that the Project presupposed a decentralized planning model which required a different role for the MOET than that it traditionally played. Likewise, the risk analysis may have underestimated the potential risk of sustainability of the Government maintaining FSQL investments, especially since the financing provided to provinces, districts and schools under the Project was incremental to that allocated to them under the NTP-E

## **2.2 Implementation**

The SDR 101.4 million Credit for the Project was approved by the Bank's Board on May 6, 2003, and became effective on October 10, 2003. Its original December 31, 2009 Closing Date was extended by one year. Overall, implementation proceeded well, and the Project was never considered at-risk. The main factors that influenced its implementation are described below.

*Project Management.* The Project's implementation arrangements counted on a separate PCU set up in a separate geographical location from MOET and with a Director at the same level as the Director of Primary Education (although the Project Appraisal Document had specified that the PCU would be attached to the Primary Education Department). The PCU was to be staffed with members from various departments of the MOET, in addition to national and international consultants, and would support MOET line agencies, five institutional strengthening teams (ISTs)<sup>5</sup> and national task forces for Quality Standards, Disabled Children and Highly

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<sup>4</sup> The number of targeted provinces and districts was 38 and 189 but later becomes 40 and 227 respectively. This was because some provinces and districts were divided administratively.

<sup>5</sup> The five ISTs were: (1) Strengthening planning and monitoring of educational quality—including harmonizing district-level school data collection efforts with the EMIS and undertaking analytical studies to increase sector wide effectiveness and efficiency; (2) Supporting teacher development activities and back-stopping of Vietnamese language strengthening programs for non-Vietnamese speakers; (3) Procuring and distributing educational goods and materials that will address the needs of educationally disadvantaged children; (4) Monitoring and supervision

Vulnerable Children. As it turned out, the arrangement created difficulties in the PCU's interactions with the established structure of the MOET that often led to delays in obtaining routine approvals for activities such as training programs and materials. Ideally, the PCU would have been within the Department of Primary Education, as envisaged, and played the "coordination" role and each technical department of MOET would have led the sub-component/activity that concerned their function, thereby ensuring greater capacity building and sustainability. In addition, staffing of the PCU, including issues of professional capacity and turnover affected the Project almost throughout its implementation.

*Decentralization.* Consistent with the Government's decentralization agenda, PEDC was designed to decentralize and shift decision making to local levels in the education system (notably districts, schools and their satellite campuses). The PCU set up provincial PCUs (PPCUs) in the 40 target provinces, usually in the same building and under the auspices of the DoETs that coordinated implementation through the many district BoETs' PCUs called District Management Units (DMUs). Although capacity and expertise varied widely among the DoETs and BoETs, this aspect of the design was based on strong evidence that such decentralized planning and service delivery would be far more effective in meeting local needs than centralized strategies for allocating resources. The MOET and its line departments at the central, provincial and district levels developed guidelines for reaching FSQ, providing necessary technical support to districts to improve administrative planning and management—thus enhancing their capacity to bring all schools up to acceptable educational levels and forge close linkages to their communities. The communities were to have active involvement, often for the first time, through working with District Community Development Specialists (DCDSs) to set up Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) and administering the CSF.

At the time of the Mid-Term Review (MTR), however, the majority of the Project's innovations, including this model of decentralization, were not being implemented fully as envisaged. Specifically: (a) the central authorities were not devolving responsibility for planning and implementation to the local level, and were trying to retain the power and decision-making; (b) authorities at the local level were not being encouraged to act independently, and still asked for decisions to be made by the center; (c) resources were not being provided to the local levels in a timely manner; (d) there were many redundant approval procedures required, particularly prior reviews before implementation; (e) post review procedures with timely feedback to local level authorities were not in place; and (f) assistance to improve local skills and capacity was not being provided in a timely manner.

*Infrastructure.* The main difficulties encountered under the Project related to the "hard" components, in particular school construction and procurement of school furniture. This was especially worrisome since the construction sub-component focused on the replacement of temporary structures at existing sites with solid, new classrooms, represented almost 70 percent of the Project and was critical towards the achievement of FSQ, and consequently to the achievement of the Project's objectives. Several factors contributed to the issues with infrastructure starting from the Project's design to operational issues in implementation. While the Project's decentralized implementation arrangements were supportive of the Government's commitment to decentralization, they involved trade-offs with respect to the infrastructure sub-component. A key issue involved the use of Government procedures. While the Project provided for direct contracting for infrastructure, the Government was reluctant to follow this procedure during the first three years of implementation, and opted to use national competitive bidding procedures that complied with both Government and Bank requirements—a process that delayed the contracting process greatly. On top of this, contractors showed little interest in working in difficult to reach, isolated areas, where their costs were often above a ceiling price that the Government had established for what they

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of civil works; and (5) Mobilizing and supporting community participation in education for highly vulnerable children. The ISTs were expected to play a coordinating role, generate new knowledge, and provide overall leadership and direction in project implementation. However, most project activities were to be carried out by existing departments in the MOET, DoETs and BoETs.

considered MOET's strict design standards for small works. Further, the DoETs and BoETs were not particularly experienced with construction management and required training for capacity building along with technical and advisory support throughout the construction process.

The Construction Manual, completed almost two years after implementation began, revealed 24 steps that had to be followed to contract school construction. According to the Government's Construction Law, three separate firms, and other individual consultants are required for each construction package to carry out: (a) design; (b) building; and (c) supervision. Compliance with both the Government's Construction Regulations and the Bank's Guidelines for contracting of consultants proved to be overly complex and time-consuming, and many local architectural firms were simply not interested in participating in the process, especially for small construction contracts for which Government procurement procedures allowed direct contracting.

As a result, school construction progressed very slowly; at the time of the MTR in December 2006 (halfway through the Project's originally planned implementation period), only 13 percent of the planned satellite classrooms had been rehabilitated. The main obstacles identified at the time were: (a) the approval processes were not in compliance with the Project's original design and the Operational Manual; (b) the long planning and approval processes required for preparing provincial construction budget, appointing architectural and engineering consultants and producing economic and technical reports; (c) the over-elaborate designs for the new facilities; (d) the imposition of one, often inappropriate, construction method in every province; (e) the high unit cost of the construction of facilities; and (f) the long rainy season that occurred in most parts of the country during which transport of materials in the more remote areas and construction, particularly of foundations, was very difficult. However, after the third year of implementation, the Government began following direct contracting procedures, the Credit Agreement was amended in May 2009 to increase the aggregate ceiling of works that could be contracted on this basis, and the Government took concrete steps to address issues that had been delaying school construction. As a result, construction accelerated at the later years of the project implementation.

In addition to delays in obtaining counterpart funding from the Government through MOET that created bottlenecks for the funding of school construction, a major risk situation developed in 2007-2008. The general instability in the Vietnamese economy (mirroring the instability in the global economy) and the specific instability in the construction sector led to high fluctuations and inflation in the prices of inputs for contracts that resulted in increased costs of materials and transportation and to a lesser extent labor costs. As many contracts were short-term fixed price contracts without price adjustment clauses, contractors reduced the pace of work or in some instances stopped work. For works still being contracted, this uncertainty resulted in the contractors' need to adjust prices. Two overall effects resulted from this situation: (a) an approximate nine-month delay was incurred for construction activities; and (b) though economic stability returned, the effects of inflation remained, so the cost of construction increased significantly in local currency.

*Counterpart Funding.* Provision of counterpart funds was an issue especially in the early years of the Project and caused delays especially for the infrastructure sub-component. The Government subsequently addressed this issue, and fulfilled their commitment to provide adequate funds for implementation. The Bank and the Government also agreed that it would be more efficient to separate the two sources of funding for school construction, providing 100 percent IDA funding for some schools, and for the Government to provide 100 percent funding by recognizing as counterpart PEDC schools built and funded under the Government's School Concretization Program. This was reflected in an amendment to the Credit Agreement in December 2009. Counterpart contributions in kind, in terms of completed schools built under the School Concretization Program, were to be included in the Project's financial statements.

*Delays in Procurement.* By the time of the MTR, there were delays in providing basic equipment, furniture and basic teaching and learning resources, and implementing training programs. The delays for equipment and materials procurement were the result of long lead times—often almost one year—

between the period of Bank clearance of bidding documents for contracts under International Competitive Bidding and contract award by the PCU. They also reflected poor planning by the PCU, long and cumbersome approval processes in the MOET, and on specific issues with certain contracts, such as a issues with awarding a school furniture contract to the lowest evaluated bidder. Similarly, progress with the Project's Master Training Plan (covering eight training programs that directly and indirectly improved the quality of teaching and learning) was delayed by the MTR, in part because the PCU had expanded the training program beyond the scope of the Project's design and objectives. Delays in the approval and printing of training materials also resulted in delays in the implementation training programs, particularly training in delivering child-centered and inclusive education; overcoming barriers to learning and catering for children with special needs through use of the Child Development Record; and acquiring educational management skills through use of the School Development Plan.

*Mid-Term Review.* The MTR in December, 2006 represented a "turning point" in the Project's implementation. While reconfirming the validity of the Project's Development Objectives, Components and basic design and acknowledging some successes, the MTR team was concerned about the implementation progress of the PEDC Project. At the start of implementation, the managers and staff in the PCU had no previous experience in working with the Bank, and required continuous, hands-on support by the Bank's team. The Bank's MTR Supervision team realized that the Project was falling behind its original schedule, and that the institutional model that was required for effective implementation was not materializing. Some activities had expanded beyond the mandate of the Project while other areas had received little attention and/or were subject to delays. Many opportunities had not been seized, and Government decisions tended to be delayed by bureaucratic processes. During the MTR, the team examined five areas: (a) implementing the training program; (b) accelerating construction/infrastructure; (c) achieving decentralization; (d) achieving FSQL nationally; and (e) improving project management to achieve the other four. On the positive side, by the time of the MTR capacity had improved significantly in the PCU. In light of this, and of the issues facing implementation, the MTR mission adopted a different approach to project supervision in order to reduce dependency on the Bank and donors and build the Government's ownership for project implementation. The MTR team concluded that commenting on the processes and providing specific actions, suggestions, solutions and recommendations was not as productive as setting targets that would be the responsibility of the MOET as the executing agency and the PCU as the implementing agency to achieve. The team felt that the PCU needed to assume leadership, take responsibility, focus on results and implement effectively and efficiently those activities for which it had authority. The MTR developed ten clear, concrete and time-bound targets to be met by March 31, 2007 in discussions with project management, PCU staff, the MOET and donors. The Government provided very high level support at the MTR—the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of MOET attended the meetings—and not only supported the approach taken by the MTR team, but requested continuous inputs from the PCU to ensure timely progress towards accomplishing the agreed targets. Project supervision by the Bank took on a very defined, results-based focus aimed to keep implementation on track, while clearly assigning responsibility for implementation to the PCU and the Government.

*Preparation of the Project.* While the Project was designed to introduce FSQL in disadvantaged districts, the Government's Decision No. 48/2003/QD-BGD&DT dated 24/10/2003 by the Minister of MOET, based on the version of FSQL in the PAD did not contain a procedure for determining whether schools had achieved FSQL standards. To fill the void of having no procedure so as to ascertain whether schools had achieved FSQL, the PCU with Bank agreement developed the FSQL Input Index (FII). The FII is a group of items derived from the FSQL of Decision 48, some content in areas in National School Standards, and a small number of related items. All items have a designated weight based on the perceived importance of the item to describing quality standards at schools. Weights total to 100; therefore the FII is "the metric out of a hundred". Throughout implementation, the Government and the Bank teams developed a system for measuring annual "achievement", the District FSQL Audit (Section 2.3), and a school was considered to have reached FSQL if the FII totaled 60 points or more. At the same time, during implementation, the concept of SDPs, whereby schools would analyze, on an annual

basis, their progress and present future needs and challenges, was introduced, thereby feeding into the district FSQL plans and prioritizing project activities and resource flows.

*Quality Assessment of Lending Portfolio.* The Project was reviewed twice as part of the Quality Assessment of Lending Portfolio (QALP) in starting in December 2008. After meetings and communications exchanged with the Bank's supervision team, the QALP rated the Likelihood of Achieving DOs as Moderately Unlikely, the Quality of Design and Quality of Bank Supervision as Moderately Unsatisfactory and the Quality of Implementation by the Borrower as Unsatisfactory.

While recommending areas in which to strengthen implementation and supervision, the QALP found the Project's strategy sound, its Development Objectives relevant and appropriate, its technical, economic, and financial aspects well addressed in a clear results framework, with quantitative KPIs clearly stated, good borrower commitment, a good institutional framework, a design sensitive to educational attainment challenges of poor and disadvantaged children and made available necessary resources and infrastructure, to bridge investment and achievement gaps. However, it also highlighted that the Project's design appeared too complex relative to the country's absorptive capacity, that it underestimated difficulty of reaching ethnic minorities, disabled children, migrant and street children, each of which required focused and dedicated strategy and plan of action, and found the estimates of risk in the PAD as unduly optimistic. Unfortunately, the QALP assessment came at a time that the many outputs relating to new policies, systems and initiatives designed, developed and disseminated under the Project in its early phase had just been developed and finalized, and implementation based on those very Project outputs was just beginning; hence, it may have been difficult at the time to see that the Project would ultimately be successful in applying the policies, systems and initiatives that had by then been developed (Section 3.4).

### **2.3 Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Design, Implementation and Utilization**

*M&E Design.* The PAD presented a very detailed results framework for the Project, with detailed outcome/impact and output indicators by objective and components, respectively. Several sources were to be used to monitor the Project's progress towards expected outputs and outcomes, including the Annual District FSQL Audits (DFA), for which capacity was to be developed under the Project's sub-components 1.1, *FSQL District Management*, and 3.1, *National Guidelines for FSQL*. Under sub-component 1.1, BoETs in targeted districts were to be responsible for carrying out FSQL audits and developing district FSQL plans. They were to receive support to: (a) strengthen district school data collection systems (including an initial physical inventory of all schools and satellite campuses to guide planning for civil works and requirements for classroom inputs) and implement a monitoring and evaluation system to assess progress towards FSQL goals and educational outcomes; and (b) develop a consultative annual district-wide FSQL action plan that outlined the requirements for all schools in their district to reach fundamental quality levels and served as a tool for planning and school-support purposes. The DoETs at the provincial level were to be responsible for monitoring and evaluation of FSQL implementation and quality improvements at the district level. The PCU was to be responsible for monitoring and evaluation of the Project's progress overall. Under Sub-component 3.1, a National Quality Standards Task Force was to develop and disseminate FSQL standards and guidelines for implementation, and periodically review and revise standards according to evolving Government plans and progress towards FSQL.

*M&E Implementation.* The IST for Planning and Monitoring of Educational Quality (Section 2.2) was responsible for coordinating district level FSQL planning, training and monitoring. A District FSQL Development Planning Manual and an Operational Manual for the Implementation of District FSQL Grants and Campus Support Funds were prepared as training materials and planning guidelines. Training followed a cascade approach with key DoET trainers trained at the central level, and they then organized seminars in of April each year for the BoETs who then trained Head Teachers and Deputy Head Teachers in DFA survey methods, as well as in the preparation of School Development Plans that were introduced during implementation (Section 2.2). All school managers (Head Teachers and Deputy

Head Teachers) and BoETs participated in annual 5-day professional training programs for school development planning and the FSQL audit. As a result, they know how to use annual DFA results and are becoming familiar with analytical skills appropriate to the data. They have recognized the value of standards-based school planning and of integrating FSQL data into annual school plans. School development planning was not part of the Project's original design but was developed and implemented as a complement to district FSQL planning and has become an important aspect of the FSQL process and a principle means of capacity development within schools and a key source of monitoring data.

The Project developed an effective approach for annual district FSQL planning to include activities and grants to support achievement of FSQL by district schools. BoETs in each district collected data for the DFA based on school self-assessment data, and verified results through school inspections. FSQL data is collated into annual district FSQL plans and some BoETs also use the data to produce medium-terms plans for their districts. IT Planners are responsible for collating and updating the DFA is the main responsibility of the IT Planner for their district.

Under the Project, procedures were developed for measuring and verifying progress towards FSQL, based on the DFA and the FII (see Section 2.2, *Preparation of the Project*). Yet, at mid-term, the concept of a *fundamental* school quality level was being compromised since the number of indicators had increased from 17 to 35, and FSQL was being seen as a middle order standard somewhere between the 2003 intentions (Decision 48/2003) and the NSS, rather than a *minimum* standard and *fundamental* level. This was making measurement difficult and achievement of FSQL even more so, not only for the poor and disadvantaged but nationally. The Government subsequently increased further the number of indicators for "achieving" FSQL under its Decision 55 in 2005. To ensure that the Project followed its original intent of having FSQL defined as a *minimum*, for monitoring purposes under the Project it was agreed that when a PEDC school achieved 60 percent compliance with the indicators under Decision 54 it was equivalent to having achieved FSQL as originally defined.

*M&E Utilization.* The annual DFA provides year on year performance indicators of school performance against FSQL standards and allows for annual monitoring of a school's, a district's and a province's progress towards achieving FSQL. The DFA has become a highly effective tool for planning and targeting financing and moving towards results-based delivery. With PEDC support, the DFA has been implemented in all districts nationally, over and above the districts included under the Project. This provides Viet Nam with data on school quality down to the remotest schools and villages and is a unique resource for tracking trends, determining gaps, planning and targeting financing. The Project was successful in introducing decentralized data systems at district levels and has built capacity and raised awareness on the use and application of information to monitor changes and make FSQL and operational concept. Funding for implementation of the Project at the district and provincial levels was made available based on the annual FSQL district plans. Although the Project originally aimed for data from FSQL/DFA to be integrated into the Government's EMIS, that system is still under development, with the result that the DFA is today the single most important source of educational data nationwide in Viet Nam.

The Project's planned M&E output (a comprehensive plan) was both resourced and developed but was not utilized by the PCU. Instead, M&E remained an informal activity, addressed by various external evaluations, joint-donor review missions, and reports by the ISTs. A more formal form of M&E could have improved project coordination between ISTs and strengthened PCU management capacities in planning and reporting. It could also have been useful in transferring financial and technical responsibilities from the PCU and the ISTs to the MOET upon completion. Although M&E capacity in the DoETs and BoETs improved under the Project, there was less sustainable progress in building capacity at the level of MOET.

Throughout implementation, the Project was the subject of intensive evaluation that, *inter alia*, guided the roll-out of activities that had been introduced as pilots under the Project, as well as provided useful data and analysis to inform both implementation and this ICR. Eight external evaluation studies were completed under the Project: (a) CSF and District Grants (December 2006); (b) Pilot School Readiness

(December 2007); (c) Pilot Teaching Assistant and School Readiness Programs (April 2007); (d) Training Review and Need Analysis (December 2008); (e) Evaluation of PEDC Investment in Non-Infrastructure Activities (April 2009); (f) Evaluation of PEDC Investment in Infrastructure Activities (April 2009); (g) Longitudinal Study on Teaching Assistant Program (December 2009); and (h) End of Project Evaluation (October 2010).

## **2.4 Safeguard and Fiduciary Compliance**

*Procurement.* The Project's decentralized implementation involved procurement at the central, provincial and district levels, depending on the item being procured and the respective amount. Under the Project, procurement manuals were prepared for all of these levels and for the school level as well. A full-time procurement adviser was contracted at the first few years of the implementation to provide technical assistance, organize procurement training as well as conducting internal post reviews semi-annually and addressing issues as they arose. As could be expected, capacity for handling procurement at the local levels was limited, and the procurement adviser worked closely with staff at these levels, organizing training events to slowly build capacity. Two issues arose with respect to procurement. First, there were long delays, especially in the procurement of furniture and teaching aids using ICB procedures due to long internal approval procedures for issuance of bidding documents and contract award. Second, the procurement and approval procedures for small school construction contracts involved the contracting of three separate firms for design, construction and supervision, and the same over twenty steps that would have been required for larger contracts.

*Financial Management.* By and large there were strong financial controls for resources under the Project. The design of the financial management systems and their adoption under the Project enabled the PCU and the Bank to monitor and track the use of funds. Like procurement, financial management of project funds was a shared responsibility among the school, district, provincial and central (PCU) levels. In view of the initially limited capacity among all of these levels, early implementation faced considerable challenges with financial management, and faced delays in compiling of financial information by the local levels and consequently consolidating this information by the PCU and submitting financial management reports to the Bank in a timely fashion. Two financial management review specialists worked with the PCU to address these challenges, especially to update financial transactions and records in the PEDC accounting systems and provide training to staff handling accounting and budgeting systems at the local levels. Particular challenges involved preparing financial plans, and cash flow projections based on the outputs needed in each period to achieve the targets set for the complete project period, together with realistic budgets connected to the output activities. The Project established an internal audit system although it was not a requirement by the time of the project preparation. Gradually, planning, accounting and system issues were addressed as capacity for financial management improved at all levels. There were no qualified audits for the Project and fiduciary risks were well contained.

*Safeguards.* The Project was rated Environmental Assessment Category C; hence, an Environmental Assessment was not prepared. An Indigenous Peoples Action Plan was prepared, and together with a beneficiary assessment completed during preparation, fed into the Project's design, including the targeting of schools where most disadvantaged children lived, the implementation of participatory procedures for the development of FSQI proposals, the provision for textbooks and instruction in native language, and the incorporation of programs directed at highly vulnerable children. During implementation, all of these activities were carried out as designed.

## **2.5 Post-completion Operation/Next Phase**

A specific follow-up operation is not contemplated. The PCU is expected to be in place until June 30, 2011 and most of the PPCUs were to be dismantled by the Closing Date. MOET has issued a letter to PPCUs and DoETs to instruct on a clear mechanism for handing over responsibility from the PPCUs to DoETs and relevant DoET management.

However, the Government and the Bank began addressing the issue of post-completion operation of the Project's investments and programs over two years before completion, especially since as a project, PEDC provided funding incremental to the budget and was implemented by a separate PCU through the MOET and provincial, district and school levels. The Government in 2009 established eight Sub-Committees to identify institutional and financial arrangements that would provide continuity for activities supported by the Project, as follows:

- Sub-committee # 1: Issuing Inclusive Education Policy, Strategy and Action Plans;
- Sub-committee # 2: Provision of Exemplary Inclusive Education Services (EIES) at the District Level;
- Sub-committee # 3: Integration of PEDC Training Programs for teachers and managers;
- Sub-committee # 4: Implementing and integrating FSQL baseline data with the proposed Viet Nam Education Management Information System (EMIS);
- Sub-committee # 5: Provision of Teaching assistants and School Readiness for schools with children of different ethnic groups;
- Sub-committee # 6: Budget and Community Support for schools with Disadvantaged Children;
- Sub-committee # 7: Education Initiatives (funding for innovative approaches to disadvantaged communities);
- Sub-committee # 8: Maintenance of school buildings by communities.

The recommendations of the sustainability sub-committees represent the principle mechanism through which PEDC outcomes are to be integrated into MOET systems and procedures.

The PCU worked closely with MOET's Primary Education Department (PED), Department of Ethnic Education (DEE), Department for Education Managers and Teachers, and Department of Planning and Finance (DPF) to prepare a letter signed by the Vice Minister to all provinces with respect to the importance of sustaining the Project's investments. The circular provides guidance to the provinces about the value of TAs, SR, the CSF, DCDSs and District Planners and shows that they are an effective investment, particularly for the access, attendance and achievement of ethnic minority students.

The MOET has also explained to the provinces how they can sustain successful initiatives supported by the Project through the Government's existing institutional and financing arrangements under the framework of the NTP-E 2011-2015. TBS-EFA has successfully developed a transparent and equitable funding formula for the allocation of the NTP-E. The NTP-E, approved by the National Assembly, includes the following five projects that will be managed by MOET through the provinces and districts normal channels:

- Project 1: Supporting the universalization of preschool for 5 year old children, illiteracy elimination and anti re-illiteracy, maintenance of primary education universalization, implementation of lower secondary education universalization at the right age and secondary education universalization
- Project 2: Training of IT human resource and application of IT into education
- Project 3: Strengthening teaching and learning foreign language in national education system
- Project 4: Supporting education in mountainous, ethnic minority and difficult areas
- Project 5: Enhancing training capacity of education and training institutions, including: (a) renewal of curriculum, textbooks and teaching materials; (b) training, retraining teachers, lecturers and educational administrators; and (c) enhancing, building education infrastructure/facilities

In addition, some of the important initiatives under the Project will also receive continued funding under projects that are currently ongoing or under preparation for eventual Bank financing: the School Education Quality Assurance Project (SEQAP) and the proposed School Readiness Promotion Project (SRPP).

Specifically, funding for DFA is expected to continue under SEQAP. Under that project, the Primary Education Department is expected to continue the collection of a single data set from a modified DFA

that can serve to: (a) continue to measure and monitor the national FSQ policy (and provinces, districts and schools can continue to develop annual reports); (b) monitor the implementation of SEQAP; (c) monitor Universal Primary Education; (d) provide a data base for future integration into the V.EMIS; (e) serve the purpose of research and studies for policy reform; and (f) provide data bases for planning, budgeting and prioritizing investments.

Some funding for TAs and SRs would be provided under SEQAP and SRPP, in addition to what provinces can allocate under NTP-E. Funding for the CSF will be covered through the NTP-E tuition fees exemption integrated in a Governmental Decree issued in 2010 on free tuition, tuition cost reduction, learning costs assistance from the school year 2010/11 to the school year 2014/15<sup>6</sup>. Children targeted by this decree include those targeted under the PEDC that will receive direct learning cost support to buy books, notebooks and other learning aids. SEQAP would also continue to support school-based management by directly building on the experience of the CSF in giving autonomy to schools (through principals and even pupil-teacher associations) in the management of funds for school operation and maintenance, additional Teaching assistants and lunches. Part of the SR program would be integrated under the ECEDC, supporting 5-year olds to have lunch at school. The premise is that children will be mobilized to attend school where Vietnamese language learning may take place.

The Project's training programs and materials have been assumed by the MOET's Department of Teacher Management that is currently developing a strategic plan for in-service primary teacher education and plans to issue guidance to provinces in the use of these training materials. Several provinces, at both DoET and BoET levels, have made plans for continuing to organize teacher training, using the PEDC training programs. PEDC has built provincial training-of-trainer capacity and this can be developed and extended. Although some provinces may be in a position to extend the training programs beyond the life of the Project, most will require an integration of the programs into MOET and DoET systems of in-service teacher training and support from the general budget.

The Project addressed the important issue of infrastructure maintenance three years before completion and helped to set up systems for local communities to ensure continued school maintenance, thereby protecting the Project's investments. School maintenance is to be carried out with assistance from the community (participatory school maintenance). For this to work, the Project developed a manual on school maintenance, organized a workshop for the draft manuals development and provided training to head teachers and communities. About 43,000 manuals have been printed and distributed to 18,000 schools in the 222 districts of the 40 PEDC provinces. The other 23 non-PEDC provinces have also been provided with the manual. However, communities are likely to face difficulties in financing maintenance since resources will depend on budget allocations from the NTP-E

A system for sustaining community participation has been established and is operative as follows: (a) each of the 40 DoETs has appointed staff in charge of primary education to take part in the system; (b) each of the BoETs has appointed the Head/Deputy Head of Primary Education Function and staff responsible for primary education to take part in the system; and (c) 4,500 trained head teachers/deputy head teachers are responsible for instructions and reports on community participation.

A workshop was held in 2010 to revise the *Manual for Innovation Grants* and to draft instructional documents for managing innovation grants. The funds for future innovation grants are expected to be provided by provincial educational budgets from NTP-E and the Department of Science, Technology and Environment of MOET has drafted a correspondence to be issues in 2011 instructing DoETs to use the provincial state budget for implementing Education Innovation Grants.

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<sup>6</sup> Decision No. 239/Q-TTg dated February 9, 2010 by the Prime Minister on approving the Project of Early Childhood Education Universalization for 5-year old children in the period of 2010-2015 and Decree No. 49/2010/N-CP dated May 14, 2010 by the GOV on regulation tuition exemption and reduction.

Child-centered and inclusive education is established quite recently and in PEDC districts represents a very new approach. Although teachers and schools are responsive to the training programs and are seen to apply principles of IE and child-based teaching in lesson planning and classroom activities, the impact on teaching culture remains tentative. For results to become embedded in their operations continued levels of support are required from central (MOET), DoET and BoET authorities.

PEDC has funded contract staff salaries for DCDS, IT Planner and TA positions. It is expected that many BoET will be able to integrate IT management skills within their institutional structures and be able to continue data input to some degree of quality.

### **3. Assessment of Outcomes**

#### **3.1 Relevance of Objectives, Design and Implementation**

The objectives of the PEDC continue to be relevant to Vietnam's current development priorities. Vietnam has consistently expressed strong commitment to achieving universal basic education as a foundation to social development and economic growth, and there have been notable improvements in enrollment and educational attainment since the early 1990s. Rural and lower income populations have benefited the most from increase educational attainment. Despite these improvements, however, the country is still facing two notable educational challenges: (a) increasing inequities in educational attainment beyond primary driven by higher performance of the most advantaged groups; and (b) still insufficient quality of the education system, in particular for disadvantaged groups. While access to primary and lower secondary education have become more equitable, the rural population, and even more so ethnic minorities and the lowest income quintiles have not yet been able to go beyond lower secondary generating increasing inequities, fueled by persistent inequities in primary completion. The quality of primary education, although improving, still appears to be an issue, overall and more particularly for poor, rural and ethnic minority populations, according to the latest test results. Although schools' input and processes have improved over time, there are still significant gaps in the level and distribution of these, and poor school management and insufficient community participation are still an issue in primary education, despite strong efforts to strengthen these under the Project.

As a result, the Project, its objectives and the activities is financed are fully consistent with the Government's Education Development Strategic Plan for 2011-2020 which is currently in the process of consultation and its NTP-E which both continue to emphasize the objectives supported by the Project (Section 2.5). It is also consistent with Vietnam's Poverty Reduction Strategy 2006-2010, that emphasizes measure to tackle poverty among ethnic minorities, issues related to the quality and efficiency of investment and tackling the persistent poverty of ethnic minorities while developing strong systems and institutions for transparent management of public funds. The Project's objectives are also consistent with the Pillar 2, Strengthening Social Inclusion, of Bank's Country Partnership Strategy for the period 2007-2011 that puts emphasis on: (a) supporting universal, quality basic education through investing in education infrastructure improvements and implementing education initiatives that target vulnerable group, including ethnic minorities, girls, and children with disabilities; (b) improving ethnic minorities' voice and participation in the development processes that affect them by decentralizing control over public expenditures to communities, and expanding their access to basic services; and (c) including people with disabilities in the development process.

The Project's objectives were clear, succinct, and responded to the Borrower's development priorities; its design and components, while ambitious and demanding on the existing institutional capacity, especially given the Project's decentralized implementation, responded directly to the Borrower's decentralization goals and sector priorities of reaching disadvantaged groups. In effect, the Project provided compensatory financing incremental to the normal budget and provided finance for designing and establishing new systems and innovations at the district and school level to best address the needs of its target population, and hence meet its objectives. In this sense, the Project's components comprised an integrated set of activities that needed to be designed, adopted and implemented almost concurrently for

maximum benefit, while at the same time providing capacity building to the very institutions, staff and groups that were to be directly involved in its implementation. As a compensatory mechanism, the Project has been completed, and the challenge of continuing to respond to the needs of disadvantaged groups will depend on the Government's ability to internalize the many successful innovations and lessons from its implementation. This will require not only adopting and mainstreaming monitoring systems, training programs, community initiatives, etc., but also ensuring that the funding provided under the NTP-E to provinces and districts responds to their needs and the results of their efforts, and that they are sufficiently supported in providing continuity to the successful initiatives supported by the Project.

### 3.2 Achievement of Project Development Objectives

The PEDC was a very successful investment project that provided incremental finance to a new, compensatory program that aimed to improve access to primary school and the quality of education for disadvantaged girls and boys. Progress towards the Project's Key Indicators is provided in Annex 2 and summarized below:

- **Increase in number of PEDC schools reaching FSQL.** In 2004 54% of schools in PEDC districts had achieved FSQL, as originally defined by the Project. By 2010, 68.3% of schools had reached FSQL as defined by the Government's Decision 55.<sup>7</sup> Overall, PEDC schools improved more quickly than the national average and more than the non-PEDC schools in the same provinces. Also, the range was great with some provinces reaching and exceeding the targets, e.g., 99.24% in An Giang and some not. More importantly, several of the schools that had achieved FSQL reported that they now feel energized and empowered to continue their efforts, striving towards the achievement of national standards.
- **Increase net enrollment rate.** The net enrollment rate in PEDC districts reached 98.7% in 2010, with gender equity, against the target of 96% set at Appraisal.
- **Improve primary student completion.** Primary student completion in PEDC districts reached 94.1% in 2010, with gender equity, against the target of 86 % set at Appraisal. (In 2009, female completion rates in PEDC districts were 93.9%, compared to a national rate of 95.9%.)
- **Reduce Grade 1 repetition rate.** The Grade 1 repetition rate in PEDC districts was 5.2% in 2010 against a target of less than 3% set at Appraisal. Although this represented an improvement over the 8% rate before the Project, this indicator likely fell short of its target due to a new campaign launched by the MOET two years ago to address a problem where teachers apparently passed automatically all of their students to higher grades. (Overall primary repetition rates stood at 2% for project districts in 2010 and 1.4% nationwide.)
- **Reduce dropout rate.** The dropout rate in PEDC districts declined to 2.5% in 2010 against a target of less than 4% set at Appraisal. In PEDC districts, the dropout rate in Grades 1 to 5 was 1.8%. Respondents attributed reduced dropouts to the impact of related PEDC activities, specifically, TA support and mobilizing campaigns, participation by PTAs, the CSF, provision of books and notebooks for disadvantaged children and the overall raised attractiveness of schools. Reduced language barriers are also supposed to have contributed to consistent improvements for this indicator.

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<sup>7</sup> The Project introduced the concept of FSQL as an achievable standard to which all schools, even those for disadvantaged children in remote areas could aspire to achieve. FSQL was based on five simple criteria, as set out in the PAD. The Government regulated these standards in its Decision 48 (increasing the standards a bit), and then increased the standards for FSQL even more through its Decision 55 (to a point that these were no longer *minimum* standards). In order to maintain the concept of an "achievable", *minimum* standard, the Project adopted a "proxy" that compliance with at least 60% of the requirements in accordance with Decision 55 would represent achievement of FSQL for the Project. On that basis, 80% of the PEDC schools had achieved FSQL by project completion.

- ***Increase the number of eligible disabled children in school.*** This has remained at about 2% of children throughout the Project. There have been definitional issues as “eligible” was not defined and work with the Child Development Record (CDR) showed that teachers have difficulty recognizing, identifying and recording children with special needs. (DFA data on disability is limited, does not provide for classification of disabilities and probably under-reports numbers of disabled children who are out of school). The Analysis of 2007/08 CDR-sourced data recommended the 2009 DFA include specific sources of data relating to children with disabilities. This has not yet occurred.
- ***Improve completion rate for disabled children.*** In 2006 the completion rate for disabled children was 45.6%; by 2009, the completion rate reached 71.5 %.
- ***Improve “independent learner” status in Mathematics and Vietnamese.*** The results for this will come from the Grade 5 study in 2011 that is the first time that participants in the PEDC will reach the age where they will be in Grade 5 and be assessed in the achievement study. The results from the Grade 5 2006/2007 study for PEDC schools showed that although students reaching “independent learner” status in Mathematics remained the same, in Reading they increased from 51.4% in 2001 to 64.5% in 2006/2007<sup>8</sup>. The Quality of EFA Report<sup>9</sup> reviews the most significant predictors of student achievement based on sample results for 2001 and 2007 Grade Five surveys. Some of its findings that are relevant to the Project’s outcomes include: (a) the FII is a significant and positive predictor of student achievement in the 2007 studies; (b) teacher education and training (included in the FII) was a very significant predictor of mathematics achievement; (c) the availability of classroom materials/learning tools is a significant predictors of achievement, and the most important variable is the FII as the indicator of overall school inputs (the FII effect on learning achievement in the 2007 study is substantial); (d) for schools in remote areas, school averages for teacher feedback is the strongest predictor of achievement, possibly since these students have less access to learning aids and feedback outside the school; (e) for ethnic populations, the FII and teacher excellence are especially important predictors of outcomes, since these students are less likely to receive help in the home, and are exposed to fewer non-school sources of learning. These findings all point to probably strong improvements in learning outcomes as a result of the initiatives supported by the Project.

The Project’s most notable achievement was the development and introduction of the FSQI as a first step towards helping disadvantaged districts to plan, monitor and report progress in achieving defined educational standards and the collection of DFA data since 2004. The Project played a catalytic role in designing and implementing this mechanism to measure quality levels across schools and to allocate resources according to need to raise schools and their satellites up to minimum FSQI standards which were below national standards and therefore seen as “achievable” by disadvantaged districts as a first-step towards eventually achieving national standards. FSQI procedures were piloted in the 40 PEDC provinces from 2004 to 2006, regulated by MOET Decision 48. Together these contributed directly to improving educational opportunities and results in its targeted, disadvantaged districts. The FSQI and the DFA have proven to be successful initiatives that have been expanded to the national level, allowing the Government to allocate need-based funding at the national, provincial, district and school levels. FSQI/DFA was expanded in 2005 under MOET Decision Number 55 and is now adopted nationally at primary school level (see Component 3 below). FSQI now applies in all districts in all 63 provinces of Vietnam. FSQI/DFA permit comparisons over time for the implementation of Government policies such as reaching FSQI; improving attendance; reducing repetition and dropout rates.

FSQI and the provision of quality learning environments to achieve equity for all has been accepted and the original PEDC program targeting on disadvantaged districts has now been expanded nation-wide.

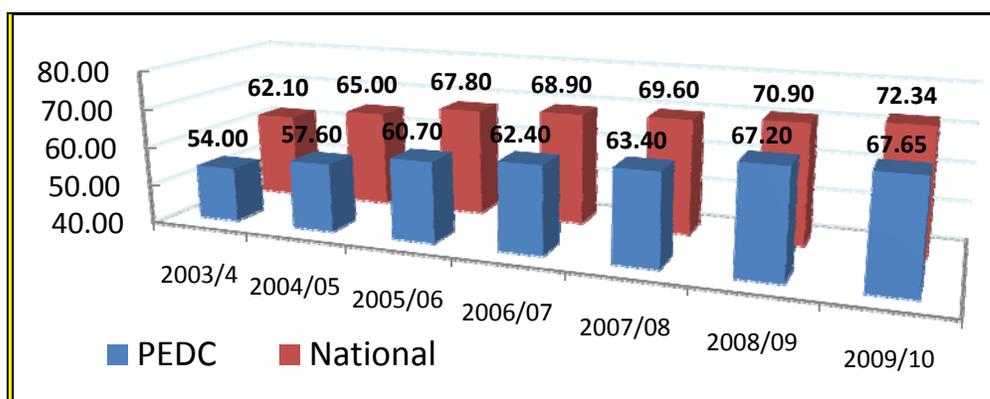
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<sup>8</sup> Report Study in Grade 5 Student Achievement in Mathematics and Vietnamese Language in the 2006-2007 School Year, Hanoi, 2008.

<sup>9</sup> Vietnam Quality of All Report (draft) World Bank. The Report, Chapter 7 of the Report analyzes “The Variable That Matter: Determinants of Student Achievement.

The importance of education management and how to structure what is happening in schools and classrooms to achieve a better quality of education and improve students' learning achievements is now more widely understood. All DoETs and BoETs have mastered the data-collection skills and they skillfully use data to identify FSQL gaps, create School Development Plans, allocate funds, target those who need it most, support communities and monitor progress.

By completion in 2010, through activities financed in each of the Project's four components in an integrated manner, 68% of schools in targeted provinces had reached FSQL (on the basis of Decision 55) and 80% on the basis of the "proxy" described in Footnote 7 on page 18 against a baseline of 54% in 2004. The range among targeted provinces was large, with some provinces reaching and exceeding targets, e.g., 99.24% of schools in the An Giang province reaching FSQL. More importantly, schools supported under the Project improved more quickly than the national average, and more than non-Project schools in the same provinces. Table (b) in Annex 2 presents annual progress in FSQL Indicators nationally and for the 227 districts targeted by the Project, and the results towards FSQL are summarized below.



The Project directly supported the implementation of a process that enabled provinces, districts and schools progress towards FSQL, including the provision of inputs needed for schools and districts to reach FSQL that have been shown to produce a quality education and an environment for learning and to help increase the number of children attending school and the likelihood of their staying until completion. These include: a safe, appropriate building with inside-outside flow and activities, trained teachers, basic equipment and furniture, basic textbooks, a rich range of supplementary resources in local languages where needed, and a committed participating community ensuring healthy motivated children attend school.

The End of Project Evaluation (EOPE)<sup>10</sup> mentions that "In all surveyed provinces, enrollment and completion rates have increased, with reduced drop-out and repetition rates, and have reached 96% or higher. A number of provinces have reached over 99% (Lang Son, Kon Tum, Dien Bien) in 2010, compared to net enrollment rates of less than 96% in 2004/05. Survey respondents attributed these results to PEDC's impact and cited the following activities: (a) school infrastructure and facilities are more spacious, attracting students and parents; (b) the quality of teaching has improved through training programs; (c) the work of Teaching Assistants has contributed to mobilizing and maintaining number of students to school; and (d) the role of PTAs and the CSF have helped support disadvantaged students in going to school."

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<sup>10</sup> Primary Education for Disadvantaged Children Project (PEDC), End of Project Evaluation, Final Report, September 21, 2010, Consia Consultants.

The Project achieved these outcomes through the implementation of its many successful activities, and the outputs described in detail in Annex 2.

### 3.3 Efficiency

An economic analysis of the Project was not prepared for the ICR. The Project's economic analysis in the PAD had projected the project's benefits based on the projected increase in net earnings that would accrue to each child who completed Grade 5 under the Project (it excluded children then already enrolled since it assumed that they would have completed their primary education before the Project's impact was felt). The Project improved student completion from 72% in 1999 to 97.1% in 2010 (these figures include all students). Moreover, completion rates for disabled children increased at a significantly higher rate, from 45.6% in 2006 to 71.5% in 2010. Cost savings associated with improved dropout and retention rates, that would provide an indicator of more efficient use of learning resources in schools, were not included in the Project's economic analysis. Nevertheless, the Project made significant progress impacting each of these in targeted districts, decreasing repetition rates from 8% in 1999 to 5.2% in 2010 and dropout rates from 12% in 1999 to 2.5% in 2010, thereby impacting pupil flow-through efficiency and promoting much improved efficiency at the primary level.

The Project also had another, perhaps equally if not more important impact on sectoral efficiency: developing and implementing a functional system whereby allocation of resources is determined on the basis of needs and capacities as determined by local schools and districts—moving from input-equity to output-equity through a system of evidence-based funding. The development and implementation of FSQL, that defined the *minimum* package of inputs necessary for providing a quality education at a school together with the basic outcomes that were expected of schools, was an efficiency-enhancing concept.

A comparison of actual project costs against appraisal estimates is provided in the table below.

#### Project Cost by Component, estimated and actual, US\$ million

Component	Estimated at Appraisal	Actual
<b>1. Achieving FSQL</b>	<b>227.73</b>	<b>233.97</b>
1.1 FSQL District Management	7.07	7.58
1.2 Instructional Improvement and Teacher Support for FSQL	44.24	49.92
1.3 Infrastructure Improvement	163.61	161.11
1.4 Community Participation and Student Support	12.81	15.36
<b>2. Education Initiatives for Highly Vulnerable Children</b>	<b>4.15</b>	<b>5.05</b>
2.1 Inclusive Education for Disabled Children	2.26	2.6
2.2 Reaching Street Children and Other High Risk Groups	1.89	2.45
<b>3. National and Provincial Institutional and Technical Support for FSQL and Vulnerable Children</b>	<b>8.17</b>	<b>12.61</b>
3.1 National FSQL Planning	0.44	0.88
3.2 Institutional Strengthening	7.73	11.73
<b>4. Project Management</b>	<b>3.62</b>	<b>7.02</b>
<b>TOTAL PROJECT COSTS</b>	<b>243.67</b>	<b>258.64</b>

The actual costs of construction and rehabilitation, per square meter, varied considerably across the country reflecting the difficulties of works in different areas. Construction costs averaged from US\$208.14 equivalent per square meter in provinces in the North, US\$189.67 equivalent per square meter in provinces in the South, US\$181.56 equivalent per square meter in provinces in the Central Highlands, to US\$171.04 equivalent per square meter in provinces in the Central region of the country during the 2007-2009 periods.

### 3.4 Justification of Overall Outcome Rating

Rating: *Satisfactory*

The Project's Outcome Rating is considered *Satisfactory* in view of its continued relevance, the substantial achievement of its Development Objectives as measured by its Key Development Indicators and the successful introduction of new and effective initiatives such as SR, VLS, TAs among others that contributed to their achievement, and the efficiency with which it was implemented and, more importantly, that it is expected to promote in the delivery of primary education, especially to disadvantaged groups.

Although the QALP rated the Likelihood of Achieving DOs as Moderately Unlikely, the Quality of Design and Quality of Bank Supervision as Moderately Unsatisfactory and the Quality of Implementation by the Borrower as Unsatisfactory (Section 2.2), with the benefit of hindsight, these ratings do not appear to have been justified, especially in view of the Project's progress towards the achievement of its Development Objectives described in Section 3.2, and the evaluation of the Bank's and the Borrower's Performance in Sections 5.1 and 5.2, respectively. In retrospect, the QALP assessment was carried out at a time when the Project's implementation had accelerated in earnest, in part reflecting the previous delays in early implementation that had by then been addressed in the MTR, but also reflecting the very nature of the Project's design that incorporated in its implementation (as opposed to during preparation) the actual design, development, dissemination and putting-in place of new policies, monitoring systems, budget formulation and allocation procedures and educational initiatives that very much depended on the participation and active involvement of the national, provincial, district, school, teacher and community levels and actors for ownership and eventual success.

### 3.5 Overarching Themes, Other Outcomes and Impacts

#### (a) Poverty Impacts, Gender Aspects, and Social Development

By design, through its focus on disadvantaged groups, the Project was targeted on the poor, although immediate poverty alleviation was not an objective, *per se*. Its activities were all targeted at districts and schools that served disadvantaged groups, including ethnic minorities. Its effects on these groups, and a comparison of the progress of schools under the Project against schools nationwide are presented in Section 3.2. The Project's Key Performance Indicators were defined to promote gender equity specifically for each of the targets to be achieved. The Project succeeded in achieving gender equity (Annex 2).

#### (b) Institutional Change/Strengthening

The Project's ring-fenced design incremental to education sector's normal budget and activities together with its implementation arrangements through a parallel structure at the central MOET level (Section 2.2), while ultimately effective for implementing the Project, were not the most conducive to institutional change and strengthening. In fact, the PAD mentioned specifically that the Project would include "two broad types of capacity building interventions: one aimed at ensuring that the Government—at all levels—has the capacity to implement the changes supported by the Project, and the other aimed at enhancing the quality of general management in the district bureaus of education and the provincial departments of education". The Project was successful in achieving both of those broad types of capacity building.

Still, the Project produced notable successes that, if internalized and sustained, could result in extremely important institutional tools for the planning, implementing and financing of primary education. The decentralization of resources and responsibilities to the local levels required that the Project strengthen capacity at every level of the system, thereby creating a firm foundation that can be built upon. With Project support, the DFA has been implemented in all districts nationally, providing the Government

with data on school quality down to the remotest schools and villages—an important resource for tracking trends, determining gaps, planning and targeting financing.

However, the EOPE<sup>11</sup> notes: “PEDC has demonstrated an effective approach to planning for development of primary education, based on decentralized data collection systems. Currently, neither annual district FSQL plans nor SDPs are incorporated into MOET systems or approved as a process at the provincial level. Rather, they function as constructs of PEDC and as mechanisms for disbursement of funds. A decision or resolution is required from MOET to provide a strengthened institutional framework for BoET annual district FSQL plans and SDPs.... DoET plans for province-wide attainment of FSQL by primary schools are outside the PEDC funding structure and are not a MOET requirement. More regular and coherent planning for FSQL at DoET levels should be required by MOET and incorporated into future funding mechanisms.”

However, significant progress was made at the local levels to build capacity among DoETs and BoET, at the schools level, in IT management and data collection systems, and in promoting community involvements in schools’ activities. The SDP process as a means of collecting data and promoting managerial effectiveness at school and district level have been developed in all project schools and are widely produced and implemented nationally.

Although most of the successful initiatives have not yet been internalized in the MOET’s mainstream operations, the institutional capacity has been strengthened at all levels of the education system, from the MOET down to the schools in the remotest villages. The challenge now is for the Government to move forward with the sustainability agenda, through the Sustainability Subcommittees described in Section 2.5, and to allocate funding in sufficient amounts to ensure that the Project’s successful systems and initiatives are provided continuity at all levels.

### **(c) Other Unintended Outcomes and Impacts (positive or negative)**

#### **3.6 Summary of Findings of Beneficiary Survey and/or Stakeholder Workshops**

N/A

#### **4. Assessment of Risk to Development Outcome**

Rating: *Moderate*

The Risk to Development Outcome is very much related to prospects for sustainability discussed in Section 2.5, Post-completion Operation/Next Phase. The Government has devoted significant priority to the work of the Sustainability Committees (Section 2.5), and several mechanisms exist whereby continuity can be provided for the Project’s successful initiatives, including SEQAP and the proposed Project (SRPP), in addition to through normal government funding channels under its NTP-E. The NTP-E is a centrally sponsored scheme in which the MOET indicates to the provinces the expected allocations of central State budget funds to NTP-E sub-components. However, provincial authorities have full discretion over planning, investment and resource allocation. Schools and districts, and more importantly children and their parents and teachers, have witnessed the Project’s activities and impact, and will undoubtedly become important advocates vis-à-vis the provinces for continuity of activities such as SDPs, TAs, SR programs through sustained allocations through their NTP-E budget. Nevertheless, the Government’s EMIS is still not in place, and as a result the substantial information in the DFA could not be integrated in that system and will require a continued “bridging” to maintain it up-to-date and relevant as a policy and planning tool. Legal, policy frameworks are not in place for TA and

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<sup>11</sup> Primary Education for Disadvantaged Children Project (PEDC), End of Project Evaluation, Final Report, September 21, 2010, Consia Consultants.

SR programs, with the result that these also will depend on alternative project funding, or requests—or community demands—from the schools/districts for continuity of these programs. Still, to the extent that provinces decide to continue implementation of these programs, funding will need to be provided either under SEQAP or SRPP, or framed within the overall provincial/district budget allocations under NTP-E. In some cases, this is already happening as a number of provinces and districts are already implementing FSQL plans from their own budget.

## **5. Assessment of Bank and Borrower Performance**

### **5.1 Bank Performance**

#### **(a) Bank Performance in Ensuring Quality at Entry**

Rating: *Satisfactory*

The Bank's Performance in Ensuring Quality at Entry is rated *Satisfactory*. The Project and its design was strategically relevant in that it responded to the Government's commitment to Education for All and especially to the challenges of providing education to disadvantaged groups. With very clear objectives, the Project had a focused design with components that addressed real problems—provision of inclusive education for ethnic minority, poor, rural communities (i.e., the last 15% of children out of school, including those with special needs). Yet, its design was also very relevant in that it allowed for flexibility, creativity and adjustment during implementation, as would be necessary given its decentralized, bottom-up implementation of new initiatives. While the Project was ambitious and a “stretch” on the Government's capacity to implement it, it was the very institutional set-up for delivering education services at the various levels of Government, and the in retrospect correct effort to engage schools, local communities, parents, etc. that necessarily brought complexity.

To ensure “ownership”, the Project financed the preparation and establishment of the instruments it needed for implementation, such as the National Guidelines for FSQL during implementation, and to ensure results, its design contemplated the piloting of activities, such as the CSF and TAs, and then evaluating their effectiveness before continuing with these programs. This proved to be a very successful strategy for introducing innovative mechanisms to address difficult challenges. Finally, the Project was innovative in that it introduced the FSQL as a first step to achieving Vietnam's National School Standards. FSQL was a simple, straight-forward concept, based on the existing National School Standards, but through definition of the minimum package of inputs necessary for providing quality education at the school level together with outcomes expected of the schools, established standards that were seen to be achievable by all. In hindsight, it would not have been possible to achieve the Project's results without its ambitious design. More importantly, and mostly due to its design features described above (clear objectives while incorporating flexibility, piloting, evaluation, etc.) the Project's objectives, components and basic design were unchanged throughout implementation, remain relevant to this day, and in fact, have resulted in its many innovations being internalized in Vietnam.

Recognizing the challenges that could be faced during implementation, the Bank's preparation team worked closely with the Government during preparation to address possible issues that could come to affect implementation. The Project's design defined roles, responsibilities and accountabilities expected at each level of government, and detailed manuals were prepared to guide implementation. Also, its design included activities required to establish a comprehensive system of monitoring progress towards FSQL, and provide training and support to provinces, districts and schools to utilize this system for information-based planning of activities and inputs, a critical part of budgeting and planning for targeting disadvantaged schools.

Perhaps the one issue that came to affect implementation and that could have been addressed better during preparation was that relating to the construction start-up processes, and the detailed Government requirements and procedures for contracting school construction and rehabilitation that had not been identified. In the end, however, this issue was addressed during supervision, and although it led to minor

implementation delays early during implementation, it in no way affected the achievement of the Project's objectives.

### **(b) Quality of Supervision**

Rating: *Highly Satisfactory*

The Bank's Quality of Supervision is rated Highly Satisfactory. The Bank's supervision team, led by one Task Manager from the start of implementation until completion, remained focused on supporting the Government and the PCU to implement the Project effectively, and provided strong and consistent leadership. Supervision was hands-on, and timely; supervision reporting was timely and candid. The Bank coordinated closely with all of the Project's donors that routinely participated in and contributed to all supervision with expert staff.

The MTR was critical to set the Project's implementation on back on track, especially in view of initial delays and minor divergences from the Project's decentralized design. The MTR focused on five areas: (a) implementing the training program; (b) accelerating construction/infrastructure; (c) achieving decentralization; (d) achieving FSQL nationally; and (e) improving project management to achieve the other four. While acknowledging some important accomplishments, the MTR team was seriously concerned about the Project's implementation progress: some activities had expanded beyond the Project's mandate while other activities had received little attention and/or were seriously delayed. A very detailed Aide Memoire of the MTR provided a thorough analysis of implementation and recommendations for improvement and reported that "many opportunities had not been seized, and management decisions tend to be bogged down by bureaucratic decision making". It reported that implementing the Project required a departure from "business as usual", and reiterated that the Bank's supervision would not micro-manage through providing specific recommendations, suggestions, actions and solution to issues, challenges and problems. In light of the serious shortcomings in implementation at the time of the MTR, the mission developed ten clear and concrete targets in discussions with project management, PCU staff, the MOET and donors that were expected to be met by March 31, 2007, and assessed in April 2007. The mission requested revised implementation, procurement and disbursement plans, and from then onwards supervision took on a very results focus, based on the ten major targets.

At the same time, the Bank's supervision team adopted a flexible approach to problems and difficulties and was willing to recommend adjustments as needed to facilitate implementation, e.g., changing systems for counterpart funding, funding 100% school furniture (originally it had been expected that only 70% would be financed, expansion of the training program as surveys and feedback established teachers' wants and needs, expansion of the CSF to the host schools, etc.). Another noteworthy aspect of the Bank's supervision was that of insisting on the carrying out of timely, external evaluations of Project-financed initiatives. In all, eight external evaluations were carried out under the Project (Section 2.3).

Although the Project was designed as a traditional investment project that would come to closure upon completion, it succeeded in introducing and implementing some notable innovations in the Government's efforts to provide improved educational opportunities to disadvantaged groups. Recognizing that these important programs (FSQL, TAs, VLS, SR, etc.) should be continued, the Bank's supervision team began discussing transition arrangements with the Government over two years before completion, and worked together with the Government and the Sustainability Teams in developing proposals to provide continuity to these important initiatives with Government or alternative sources of funding.

Finally, the integrated and sustained nature of the Bank's assistance to Vietnam's education sector has meant that there were several other operations under preparation and implementation concurrently with the Project's implementation. The portfolio under implementation and preparation included several complementary investment projects as well as the TBS for EFA Program. Throughout, the Bank's supervision effort and the Government counterparts worked as a team, sharing information and programs that benefited the entire program. For example, the TBS for EFA program benefited from the system for

data collection and data from the Annual DFA, while continuity to this successful system and data are expected to be provided under the SEQAP Project.

### **(c) Justification of Rating for Overall Bank Performance**

Rating: *Satisfactory*

The Overall Bank Performance is rated Satisfactory. While Bank Performance in Ensuring Quality at Entry is rated Satisfactory, and the preparation effort and project design considered appropriate, the Bank's Supervision had to devote an extraordinary effort to keep the Project on track.

## **5.2 Borrower Performance**

### **(a) Government Performance**

Rating: *Satisfactory*

The Government's Performance (i.e., the MOET and the MOF) is rated Satisfactory. The Government remained fully committed to the Project's objectives throughout, and despite some delays in counterpart funding during early implementation, provided continued financial, staffing and other support to ensure that it would achieve its objectives. The Project counted on high-level support from the Government throughout. The Deputy Prime Minister participated throughout the MTR, and provided strong support and follow-up to ensure that agreed actions were taken by the PCU in a timely manner. The Government embraced the concept of FSQL, but it changed over the period of the Project's implementation, to the point where a revised criteria was needed to monitor performance of PEDC schools towards FSQL (see Footnote 7 on Page 18). Despite this, the Government has shown strong commitment to sustainability and enthusiasm for ensuring that project innovations that have been shown to improve children's learning and achievement will continue after completion. Significant progress towards internalizing the Project's accomplishments was made through the work of the eight sub-committees led by the appropriate technical departments in the MOET. However, incremental funding under the Project will cease and continued financing will need to be absorbed through normal funding channels.

### **(b) Implementing Agency or Agencies Performance**

Rating: *Satisfactory*

The Implementing Agencies' (the PCU, and the provincial DoETs (PPCUs), and the BoETs (DMUs) Performance is rated Satisfactory. The Project required implementation at several levels of government, in addition to at the school level. These arrangements required strong efforts by the PCU to not only implement certain activities, in part through the ISTs, but also to coordinate, supervise and provide assistance and training to implementing agencies at the provincial, district and school level. Some initial issues with project management were identified and addressed at the time of the MTR, namely: (a) delays in project outputs; (b) monitoring of output progress; (c) central PCU organization; (d) forward production and financial planning; (e) decentralization through delegation to the appropriate level, and (f) strategic thinking on sustainability. From the time of the MTR, the PCU management began to assume leadership, took responsibility for implementation at the appropriate level, focused on results, and began to facilitate and implement project activities in a forward-looking timely manner. The PCU followed the Project's Operational Manual, and began to follow the description of roles and responsibilities assigned to each of the Project's implementing agencies, providing technical support and guidance where needed. Throughout, the PCU was committed to the concept of FSQL, the DFA, and to ensuring the collection and recording of data, and the use of the system as a needs-based system for resource allocation.

The PCU also developed flexible approaches that helped the communities and schools to plan, budget and use their funds to meet their own needs, within their own capacity. The PCU developed a "menu" approach and the SDP and district FSQL plan comprised three "soft" menus: (a) mandatory, where

funds could not be used for other purposes, e.g. students' stationery, CSF, learning materials, etc.; (b) teacher training; and (c) school-based teacher training where schools could implement schemes meeting their own requirements for teachers' development. In a decentralized project and across a diverse range of provinces/districts this proved a useful approach.

### **(c) Justification of Rating for Overall Borrower Performance**

Rating: *Satisfactory*

The Overall Borrower Performance is rated Satisfactory, based on the Government's and the Implementing Agencies' continued commitment to the Project, its design and implementation arrangements throughout, and their commitment to seek and design processes to identify options for ensuring sustainability of the Project's accomplishments.

## **6. Lessons Learned**

The Project provides several lessons related to education policy, instrument design and institutional arrangements.

### *Education Policy:*

The concept of quality of education is a dynamic concept that evolves over time. The evolution and development of education quality should be defined and formed to respond to a specific country or socio-economic and cultural context at a certain period of time. Therefore, setting up an FSQL that matches the education system's implementation and financial capacity was critical to ensure its relevance and usefulness. The FSQL was a successful innovation that provided a "ladder" to national standards by setting a realistic and attainable target for disadvantaged schools and has since become national policy and implemented in all provinces. Most importantly, it provides standards for a needs-based targeted allocation of funds and real data to schools on what to spend it on in order to reach the standards. In terms of setting standards, the Project set FSQL as the minimum standards that a school should have in place to provide a basic learning environment. Many schools that have attained FSQL feel successful and empowered, and as a result, are setting new, higher, targets to eventually achieve national standards. Caution, however, should be taken when seeing progress towards initial minimum standards, and using this as an opportunity to increase standards (as was done by the Government's Decision 55). The value of fundamental quality standards, as originally defined in simple, easy to follow and monitor terms, is that they were seen as achievable by the provinces, districts and schools targeted by the Project.

Of all the standards, schools were most challenged by FSQL requirements for physical infrastructure. Where these targets are unrealistic and difficult to achieve, provision should be made for FSQL certification based on other more manageable criteria, specifically including the quality of teaching and learning, as is currently provided for by the FII.

Initiatives that strengthened the ties between schools and communities proved to be very successful in improving educational outcomes. These included the SR initiative a community-based, pre-primary school development program introduced to strengthen Vietnamese language competencies in districts with significant ethnic minority populations, where Vietnamese is spoken as a second language and support transition from pre-school to Grade 1, and the introduction of TA. TAs, bi-lingual members of local communities had primary responsibility for implementation of SR programs, under the coordination of satellite school and Grade 1 teachers. The initial pilot and later expansion of the TA initiative was successful in creating a link between Grade 1 teachers at satellite campuses, to support delivery of the SR program, and their work with families and communities to mobilize children in coming to school and to help ensure attendance. In disadvantaged areas without ethnic minority teachers, or without ethnic language speaking teachers, TAs also played a pivotal role in enabling schools and satellite campuses to meet minimal quality standards. TAs not only helped teachers, but played an

important role as a language and culture bridges between school, family, and community and helped change local people's awareness about their children's learning, with consequent positive outcomes. As mentioned in Section 2.5, funding for several of these initiatives is expected to be sustained by provinces with funding under the framework of the NTP-E 2011-2015.

#### *Instrument Design:*

The Project was designed as a traditional investment project, providing incremental finance to a project with specific time-bound objectives that were expected to be achieved in targeted districts by completion. Its institutional arrangements were designed to facilitate and ensure the Project's effective implementation, but institutional strengthening on a national scale over and above that which would be required for successful implementation was not an explicit objective of the Project (although there was an indicator that expected the MOET, and participating DoETs and BoETs to have regularly demonstrated strengthened capacity to identify, plan for, support and monitor the needs of educationally disadvantaged children). Nevertheless, the Project's positive outcomes brought a critical challenge: how to ensure that the initiatives introduced under the Project are not only maintained upon completion (e.g., the schools constructed maintained, the learning materials utilized, etc.), but also expanded, internalized and adopted as national policies more broadly. As a quasi-compensatory project, aimed at leveling outcomes in disadvantaged districts, the Project's design was contained, and it achieved mostly its expected objectives. But, given that, despite progress, there are still important differences in educational outcomes across schools, should this "compensatory" financing terminate now that the Project has been completed? The Bank's supervision team worked closely with the Government well in advance of completion to ensure sustainability of the Project's initiatives, with the objective of ensuring continued implementation of proven initiatives thereby further reducing the gaps in outcomes between schools in disadvantaged districts and other schools. Still, in retrospect, the question remains as to whether support for an ongoing program coordinated directly by the MOET through its technical departments (as opposed to through the PCU), and directly through the DoETs (as opposed to through the provincial PCUs) would not have provided greater sustainability and internalization of the very capacity that the Project helped develop.

Several other aspects of the Project's and instrument's design were effective, especially, the piloting of innovative activities and their evaluation before expansion, as well as building into the Project's design activities that were central to the Project's objectives such as the development and dissemination of FSQL standards and guidelines. In addition, the Project's design was such that it was well-defined, but still sufficiently flexible to allow creativity and minor adjustments based on provincial, district and school needs, that were all so important to ensure that its outputs and results responded to local realities. At the same time, this mix between up-front design and definition versus flexibility resulted in the continued relevance of the Project's objectives, components and activities throughout implementation without the need for their restructuring.

#### *Institutional Arrangements:*

Given that the Project's implementation was coordinated by a Project Coordination Unit, with the consequent issues that structure entailed for sustainability of institutional capacity that was developed, its structure was effective for implementing project activities. The establishment of ISTs for planning and monitoring, teacher development activities, educational goods and materials, civil works and community participation, ensured effective leadership, coordination, technical support and knowledge sharing between the MOET, the PCU, the DoETs and the BoETs. The involvement of schools, communities and parents in the Project's activities ensured "bottom-up" engagement and support for the initiatives and activities financed, and bode well for continued demand for its successful programs and initiatives.

## **7. Comments on Issues Raised by Borrower/Implementing Agencies/Partners**

### **(a) Borrower/implementing agencies**

The Government provided comments on a draft of this report through a letter to the Bank dated June 15, 2011 (Annex 7). Overall, the Government's comments on the Project and its implementation were very positive, and highlighted the important role that the Project played in developing and implementing a successful model for improving the accessibility to quality education for disadvantaged students in some of the country's most remote areas. The Government's comments (translated) are provided in Annex 7 and have been incorporated in the final version of this report.

The Government also submitted comments from 15 of the provinces that benefitted from assistance under the Project. These provinces, both in their written comments and through participation of their staff in a final project wrap-up ceremony in November 2010 (where issues of sustainability were very much on the agenda) unanimously cited the importance of the several innovative activities supported in their provinces and the positive impacts that these have had on providing more accessible and better quality education for their students in ways that address effectively the constraints that these students faced. These comments are provided in Annex 6.

### **(b) Cofinanciers**

A draft of this report was sent to all of the Project's co-financiers (Section 1.7). Minor written comments were received from CIDA (Canada), UK DFID and NORAD (Norway). Again, co-financiers were unanimously positive about the Project's successes and about the notable achievements towards its development objectives, both of which were important accomplishments given that it addressed complex and interrelated issues in Vietnam's most disadvantaged areas. The written comments are provided in Annex 8.

The co-financiers of PEDC requested to have an executive summary for the report; the executive summary is presented in the Annex 9.

### **c) Other partners and stakeholders**

*(e.g. NGOs/private sector/civil society)*

## Annex 1. Project Costs and Financing

### (a) Project Cost by Component (in USD Million equivalent)

Components	Appraisal Estimate (USD millions)	Actual/Latest Estimate (USD millions)			Percentage of Appraisal
		Credit and MDTF Amended	GOV's contribution	Total	
Achieving FSQL	227.73	207.09	26.88	233.97	103%
Education Initiatives for Highly Vulnerable Children	4.15	4.77	0.28	5.05	122%
National and Provincial Institutional and Technical Support for FSQL	8.17	11.22	1.39	12.61	154%
Project Management	3.62	3.55	3.46	7.02	194%
<b>Total Baseline Cost</b>	<b>243.67</b>	<b>226.63</b>	<b>32.01</b>	<b>258.64</b>	<b>106%</b>
Physical Contingencies	0.00			0.00	0.00
Price Contingencies	0.00			0.00	0.00
<b>Total Project Costs</b>	<b>243.67</b>	<b>226.63</b>	<b>32.01</b>	<b>258.64</b>	<b>106%</b>
Front-end fee PPF	0.00			0.00	.00
Front-end fee IBRD	0.00			0.00	.00
<b>Total Financing Required</b>	<b>0.00</b>				

### (b) Financing<sup>12</sup>

Source of Funds	Type of Cofinancing	Appraisal Estimate (USD millions)	Actual/Latest Estimate (USD millions)	Percentage of Appraisal
Borrower		43.37	32.01	74%
IDA		138.76	151.38	109%
Australian Agency for International Development		1.00	0.994	99%
Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA)		8.38	12.469	148%
British Department for International Development (DFID)		38.69	44.124	114%
Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation		13.47	14.360	106%

<sup>12</sup> Part of the change of donor contribution in percentage term is because the change of exchange rate between donor's currency (donors' commitment) and USD over time.

## **Annex 2(a). Outputs by Component**

The Project made progress towards its Development Objectives through the implementation of activities, and through outputs for each of its components and sub-components, as described below and presented in the Results Framework Matrix in this Annex.

### *Subcomponent 1.1: District Management*

PEDC inputs have focused on: (a) strengthening school data collection systems, and (b) development of annual district FSQl plans by BoETs (see also Section 2.3, *M&E Implementation*). Annual District FSQl plans were developed and reviewed by BoETs at the end of each year (August 15), and presented for approval to DoETs. The plans were based on data collected during DFA surveys and compiled in the DFA database by IT planners. SDPs, verified by BoET inspection teams, provided primary sources of DFA. The District FSQl plans were subsequently submitted to the PCU as the basis for grant applications that presented items to be procured and activities to be carried out in support of FSQl achievement. The DFA allows data to be tracked by school year and is intended to result in realistic targets as the basis for activity planning at district level and for the grant application.

Annual District FSQl plans, as set out in PEDC procedures, addressed four generic objectives: (a) all schools and satellite campuses achieve FSQl targets; (b) all school-age children are enrolled in school; (c) 96% of age 14 children graduate from primary school; and (d) gender equity targets are achieved. These objectives provide the context in which the five criteria or “chapters” of FSQl are laid out: (a) physical infrastructure, teaching/learning equipment and aids; (b) teaching staff; (c) school organization and management; (d) education socialization; and (e) educational activities and quality.

The EOPE reports: “PEDC has successfully introduced a quantifiable system for primary education data collection, based on the district FSQl audit (DFA). Data collection systems are in place and annual district plans for FSQl achievement are being developed and implemented by BoETs. Schools are producing SDPs and principles of planning for FSQl are widely understood and adopted at school levels. The DFA enables school quality levels to be ranked and monitored and improvements in school quality standards have been demonstrated over time. Achievement of National School Standards has become a realistic objective for a significant proportion of PEDC schools”. The EOPE also reports that capacities have been built at the level of DoETs, BoETs and schools to support standard-based planning, and that initiatives are under way to several provinces to sustain management training initiatives after completion, and to integrate the Project’s model of FSQl planning into provincial and district systems and procedures in the medium to long term. Challenges reported include improving data collection procedures and reliability of data that vary among districts and provinces, further strengthening BoET capabilities through integration of IT planning responsibilities, and integrating FSQl monitoring and assessment procedures into provincial and district systems. More importantly, district and school planning through FSQl and SDPs operate outside the MOETs normal sector planning processes, with approval of annual plans by the PCU and funding under the Project, both of which will terminate.

### *Subcomponent 1.2: Instructional Improvement and Teacher Support for FSQl*

The Project financed teacher training and professional development and upgrading the quality of teachers at satellite campuses. Activities included the design of training programs and modules, and training of Teachers and Head Teachers through a “needs-based” strategy to professional development of teachers, seeking to address the pedagogical needs of disadvantaged children. Teachers were supported through training in child-centered teaching and learning methodologies to help children to learn according to their abilities and potential. A summary of training and professional development under the Project is provided below:

Type of Program	Program	Target	Result
BASIC (3 Programs)	Child-based teaching	130,000	112,626 teachers in 40 provinces
	Subject-based teaching	60,000	63,680 teachers for Grades 1 and 2 (provinces trained more using needs-based funding)
	Vietnamese Language Strengthening	120,000	95,000 teachers in 40 provinces
TARGETED (4 programs)	Teaching Assistants	7,500 TA and 7,500 teachers	7,500 TAs and 7,500 Grade 1 teachers trained. annually starting in 2006-2010
	Overcoming Barriers to Learning	30% of all teachers	39,480 teachers in 40 provinces (provinces trained more using needs-based funding)
	Specialized Teaching Skills in the Inclusive Classroom	30,000	38,000
	EIES support teacher training	150	153 support teachers and 456 classroom teachers
EDUCATION MANAGEMENT (2 programs)	School Development Plan	10,500	10,461 head teachers and deputies ,
	Education Management	10,500	10,586 head teachers and deputies ,
COMMUNITY (4 programs)	Child Development Record	43,000	45,620 personnel trained (now integrated into DFA training)
	PTAs and Campus Support Funds	270,000	270,350 people trained
	School maintenance package training	7,000 main schools and satellites	54,000 community people trained by 283 DCDSs. Also 120 provincial trainers, 4,800 Head teachers, 4,800 PTA reps, 40 DoET officers and 4,500 school managers trained.
	Needs-based training	20,000	11,289 reported from 22 provinces (number is larger as not all provinces reported)

*Source: The Ministry's Progress Report November 2010.*

*General notes: Head teachers, and Deputy Head teachers and teachers may attend more than one course; needs-based training has been used locally in a flexible way to cover gaps in training and provide school based training on specific needs.*

District level respondents to the EOPE were invariably positive about the training programs under the Project and felt the programs had made a significant difference to the way teachers teach and resulted in improvements to learning outcomes. Teachers have increased confidence in using new teaching methods and are able to apply a variety of teaching new aids, including adaptation of training materials to different subjects and becoming interested in making their own materials. The training programs have contributed to a change of attitude among school staff, particularly concerning inclusive education but more generally about the roles of teachers and the function of district schools. Combined with the impact of other Project initiatives, parents and communities also have increased interest in the schools and are more confident in the quality of education being received.

While all of the programs, and the materials provided undoubtedly had a direct impact on the Project's outcomes, several were particularly relevant to its focus on disadvantaged groups, ethnic populations and the disabled: Child-based Teaching, Overcoming Barriers to Learning (intended for teachers working with children with specific disabilities), Vietnamese Language Strengthening, School Readiness and Teaching assistants.

The EOPE evaluated the Child-based Teaching, Overcoming Barriers to Learning and Vietnamese Language Strengthening programs. These programs addressed issues of access to education, enrolment and retention, particularly among ethnic minorities. The EOPE evaluated these programs positively, with "teachers reporting adoption of new teaching methods resulting in improved learning outcomes". It also concludes that "barriers to learning have been reduced in PEDC districts and positive attitudes towards inclusive education have been introduced, a conclusion supported by DFA data, that the overall attractiveness of schools has been raised through training program implementation with schools viewed as being more relevant and accessible by parents and communities."

These training programs have been innovative, distinct from MOET pre-service programs, and have provided teachers with important skills and competencies for child-based and inclusive education, thereby contributing to improved learning outcomes, including for children with language barriers or other learning difficulties. Responses from Teachers and Head Teachers were positive, and classroom observation in the context of the EOPE found that teachers had understood and sought to apply concepts learned through training, and used visual aids, including learning cards, in addition to materials they had developed at their own initiative.

Another external evaluation confirms these findings.<sup>13</sup> It describes teachers as being better equipped in terms of teaching skills and being able to establish a conducive learning environment for children with disabilities with the quality of teaching and learning being much improved, after participating in the Overcoming Barriers to Learning training program. It notes significantly changed attitudes and perceptions of teachers towards working with disabled children with teachers more accepting and welcoming and more attentive to individual learning needs, such as by setting individual goals in class and tailoring homework to students' ability. As a result, students are more motivated and attendance by disabled children has increased (although DFA data is weak on disability, and data is compiled through the CDR).

The EOPE team observed that: (a) teachers' attitudes of teachers in favor of inclusive education have been changed as a result of the training; (b) teachers feel better prepared to work with disabled children and have a heightened awareness of special needs; (c) teachers had individual educational planning record books for disabled children (CDR); and (d) previously, special education has been provided only in specialized schools at provincial level.

Vietnamese Language Strengthening (VLS), a program targeted at ethnic minority children for whom Vietnamese is not a first language, was included under the Project as a key activity aimed at expanding access to primary, reducing dropout and repetition rates, and increasing completion rates. A five-day training program for teachers was carried out in all targeted provinces under a cascade training approach. The Project provided a full set of VLS teaching material for satellite campuses, including: (a) VLS materials for teachers (teachers guide); (b) Teaching Assistant guidebook; (c) VLS children's materials; (d) VLS children's workbook/coloring books; (e) VLS cards; (f) VLS/SR Language Corner (established in all Grade 1 classes; (g) SR materials; (h) SR materials; (i) SR language guides; (j) SR full-color picture book; (k) supplementary reading books; (l) TA Learning Aids (for Learning Corners); (m) Audio tapes and cassette player; and (n) Big Books. Student supplies were procured under annual district FSQI plans/grants, together with additional supplies for the TA and SR programs. MOET approved Teacher Guides were procured centrally. PEDC materials were in use in many schools, materials and textbooks are fully provided, and in sufficient time for schools to distribute them for students at the beginning of the school year.

Other very successful initiatives supported by the Project were the School Readiness (SR) initiative, a community-based, pre-primary school development program introduced to strengthen Vietnamese language competencies in districts with significant ethnic minority populations, where Vietnamese is spoken as a second language and support transition from pre-school to Grade 1, and the introduction of Teaching assistants (TA). The Project supported development of the programs and distribution of materials, and training. Under SR programs new Grade 1 students can learn Vietnamese; existing Grade 1 students can revise Vietnamese in three summer months. TAs, bi-lingual members of local communities trained under the Project and provided with teaching aids, have primary responsibility for implementation of SR programs, under the coordination of senior satellite school and Grade 1 teachers. The TAs' terms of reference are to support Grade 1 teachers at satellite campuses, to support delivery of the SR program, and to work with families and communities to mobilize children in coming to school

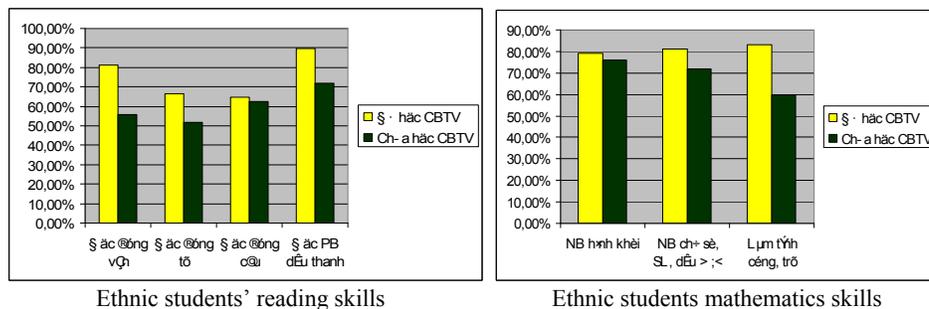
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<sup>13</sup> PEDC Investment: Non-infrastructure (July 2009)

and to help ensure attendance. The TAs are contracted by BoETs on an annual basis and paid a salary. Training of TAs training followed a cascade approach with training delivered directly by Head Teachers and Deputy Head Teachers.

An external evaluation the TA and SR initiatives carried out under the Project, The Longitudinal Study on Teaching Assistants (TAs) and School Readiness (SR) programs shows very promising findings and the value of this intervention<sup>14</sup>. The study evaluated the effectiveness of TA utilization on progress and learning results of students in Grade 1 (and compared satellites with SR and TA and satellites with the same conditions but without SR and TA). The evaluation’s main findings corroborate earlier evidence that students in classes with a TA attend more regularly and achieve better results in mathematics and Vietnamese language than those students in similar classes without a TA. The study found that “In surveyed districts, the TA program has made significant contributions in preparing children for school through Vietnamese language acquisition under the SR program. In disadvantaged areas without ethnic minority teachers, or without ethnic language speaking teachers, TAs also play a pivotal role in enabling schools and satellite campuses to meet minimal quality standards.

The Longitudinal Study qualitatively assessed communication skills (listening/speaking), vocabulary, ability to follow teaching instructions, reading, writing and mathematics abilities, and found clear correlations in each area showing better results in satellite schools with TAs than in schools without them. It concluded that 83.3% of satellite schools with TAs achieved “good” results at Grade 1, versus a rate of 50% in schools without them - a gain of 33.3%. While it is still about 13% below the national average, these findings point to important gains attributable to the TA and SR programs. BoETs and teachers were also consistent in reporting to the evaluators the improvements to learning outcomes at Grade 1, and describing the SR program as providing a “big leap” in improving ethnic minority students’ Vietnamese capacity and in making them more confident when starting school. SR clearly has a positive effect on the learning of ethnic minority students in Grade 1. For example, the two charts below on reading skills and mathematics show that ethnic students attending SR class (yellow bar) do better than students not attending SR classes (black bar) when assessed at the end of the first semester of Grade 1, 2008.



The TA program has contributed to: (a) increasing enrollment rates; (b) mobilizing school-aged children to attend class and maintain regular attendance; and (d) thereby decreasing repetition and drop out rates. TAs have not only helped teachers, but have played an important role as a language and culture bridges between school, family, and community and helped change local people’s awareness about their children’s learning. TAs spend about two thirds of their time supporting teachers and students in the class, and the remaining time cooperating with the students’ families. The TAs helped students attend class more regularly, they have helped the children with homework and to understand lessons in the class

<sup>14</sup> Mid-term Report “Longitudinal Study on Teaching Assistants and School Readiness” April 2009

and follow teachers' instructions. Moreover, TAs have created friendly learning environments so the children are more interested to attend class and learn better. Parents have been assured when their children get good learning results so they encourage their children to go to school regularly. Some TAs take children to school and bring them home, which make parents feel satisfied and sate. Parents and community members have developed trust in TAs and schools. TAs have also supported individuals with special needs and children with disabilities.

The TA and SR initiatives have proven positively effective: (a) having great impacts on access to the primary schools of the ethnic minority students, children with disabilities and the most disadvantaged children; (b) playing an important role in accessing the inclusive education; and (c) creating the close relation between school, students' families and supporting individual students.

The Project has also recognized opportunities to strengthen teaching capacities through inter-school cooperation and exchange of teaching experience. The Exemplary Inclusive Education Services Initiative and introduction of "cluster-based training", modeled on Colombia's Escuela Nueva<sup>15</sup>, represent a promising direction for district level planning and an alternative approach to the "cascade" training model.

### *Subcomponent 1.3: Infrastructure Improvement for FSQ*

Infrastructure, including civil works, provision of furniture and related technical services accounted for the Project's largest component. By project completion, 6,126 had benefited from the Project, 12,383 new classrooms had been constructed, and 6,720 had classrooms had been renovated or upgraded. Additional sites and classrooms benefited from assistance from the Government's School Concretization Program (see Section 1.7), as presented below:

Type	Plan at MTR	Total	PEDC	School Concretization Program (all new classrooms)
New classrooms	14,535	<b>13,141</b>	12,383	758
Upgraded/renovated classrooms	3,338	<b>6,720</b>	6,720	N/A
Teacher rooms	5,607	<b>5,101</b>	4,834	267
Water points	5,075	<b>4,909</b>	4,694	215
Latrines	5,690	<b>5,321</b>	5,072	249

Source: Developed from Ministry's Progress Report November 2010 and Construction IST  
 PEDC teacher rooms, water points and latrines include new and repaired/renovated

While on the whole the quality of construction has met standards, an external evaluation of the infrastructure investment (VICA) reported some concerns about the finishing and the quality of construction in about 5% of buildings, creating the need for extraordinary maintenance.<sup>16</sup> Despite this, the same report highlights that the beneficiaries' (teachers, parents and commune leaders') perception about the PEDC schools is overwhelmingly positive. More than 97% agreed that the upgraded campus was more beautiful and attractive, encouraged children to attend school, more child-friendly and conducive to learning. There was a strong sense of ownership and they are willing to share in the maintenance of the building. Overall, more than 96% of beneficiaries agreed they are happy with the Project.

<sup>15</sup> The Government is under the process of application for an FTI funds to scaling up this model – called Vietnam New School Model project (VNEN)

<sup>16</sup> Evaluation of the Infrastructure Investment (School Construction) VICA Consultants International, Hanoi, March 2009.

The PCU developed plans (involving no new construction) for repairing main school and satellite sites in 23 needy provinces in 2010. PEDC was the first project to provide investment for school construction at satellite sites of primary schools. The program was completed as planned, carried out efficiently and completely implemented through decentralization to DoETs and primary schools.

#### *Subcomponent 1.4: Community Participation*

Initiatives to seek community participation were a highly successful aspect of the Project. The focus of these activities was on strengthening PTAs to support and monitor FSQL, and, more recently, to support school maintenance training in order to ensure sustainability of the many gains made over the last five years. In July 2010, 20 provinces shared experiences and recorded lessons learned on community participation under PEDC and the results were printed and distributed to districts and provinces in *Achievements of Community Participation*.

DCDS in the BoETs have played a key role in mobilizing communities in: (a) conducting surveys to identify teachers' needs, needs for Vietnamese language strengthening for preschool children; (b) organizing training courses for teachers in the satellites and Head Teachers of main schools, training for communities and parents on CSF management (see below); (c) mobilizing community participation in the inclusive education for children with disabilities by distributing inclusive education materials; and (d) participating in monitoring the TA pilot program, supporting Head Teachers of main schools and teachers in the satellites in implementing the CSF, supervising and taking part in PTAs. District Planners, also in BoETs, were responsible: (a) participating and supervising the implementation of the DFA, attending training sessions, supervising staff in charge of conducting DFA, analyzing the DFA data, and developing DFA reports; and (b) assisting project units in the districts to develop overall district FSQL plans and annual operation plans and support different types of reports.

The CSF was another highly successful innovation under the Project. The objectives of the CSF were to: (a) provide flexibility for schools to deal with locally specific issues that impact the enrolment, the retention, or quality of education that children receive, and (b) strengthen the relationship between schools and communities by encouraging greater community participation in the decision making at the main and satellite campus over the long term. Under the CSF, annual grants provided to schools and satellite schools to help with small purchases, support some educational activities as well as enhance community participation in school activities, based on the schools determination of needs. For example, the CSF provided support for: (a) disadvantaged children to go to school through such activities as buying clothes, learning aids, physical education equipment; (b) overcoming difficulties in the class such as buying water bottles, water pots, glasses, medicine boxes; (c) activities related to the SR program such as teaching and learning materials and aids; and (d) extracurricular educational activities with community participation such as buying teaching, learning aids, materials to enhance awareness of students in the ethnic minority languages and Vietnamese, encouraging active involvement of different types of students (such as girls, groups of ethnic minority students).

The CSF for the disadvantaged primary students produced many benefits, including (a) supporting children to go to school and attend class regularly, which contributed to decreasing repetition and dropout rates; (b) supporting schools and satellites to reach FSQL; and (c) strengthening community participation through activities and planning and using CSF.

#### *Subcomponent 2.1: Inclusive Education for Disabled Children*

A draft National Inclusive Education Policy, Strategy and Action Plan on IE was developed and is pending approval as part of the Government's Strategy for Education and Training 2009-2020. As part of the training program, 240 key teachers in 40 provinces were trained on Inclusive Education using the revised *Education of Children with Learning Difficulties* materials and *Exemplary Inclusive Education Series Initiative (EIES)*.

Final activities on the EIES pilots were as follows: (a) a DVD is being developed to support training of teachers of children with learning difficulties; (b) a DVD was developed to support surveys on disadvantaged children; (c) EIES were monitored and evaluated in two provinces; and (d) a conference on summarizing, evaluating EIES was held to collect feedback, comments for material and sustainability of EIES at the district level.

### *Subcomponent 2.2: Reaching Street and Working Children and Other High Risk Groups*

The Project supported activities aimed at reaching street children and working children and other high-risk groups, in a decentralized manner, and knowledge sharing of these activities. A program of Innovation Grants provided local solutions to local problems by local people in innovative ways. The objectives of the Innovation Grants were to: (a) develop and implement new and innovative approaches to meeting the educational needs of vulnerable children of primary school age; (b) encourage and facilitate the participation of government, non-government and other stakeholder groups in serving the needs of at-risk and highly vulnerable children; and (c) try-out quality interventions that could be applied widely, potentially nationally, to reduce the number of at-risk and highly vulnerable children who were not accessing and/or completing primary education. Grants were selected on the basis of a competition-based process that operated on annual cycle. Projects/programs, i.e., expenditure of grant funds, were to be implemented within a 12-month period and the amount of each grant was limited to a maximum of US\$ 10,000 for any given 12-month period.

Under the Project, a total of 123 grants were awarded in three cycles. By January 2010, 122 projects under the program of Innovation Grants had been completed, reviewed and summarized. Examples of grants include the following: (a) *Support for Repeaters of First Grade*, a project targeted at children who were repeating first grade at ten satellite campuses by providing support that was targeted to their school/classroom work and their environmentally-based psycho-social needs; (b) *Children Helping Children*, a project targeted at school-age children, aged 5 to 11, that were not attending school because they were working with their family or in situations arranged/accepted by their families in the satellite campuses in Kien Giang, that aimed to develop functional literacy skills for children who remained outside the school; and (c) *Involving and Caring for All*, a project targeted at school-age children, aged 5 to 11, not attending school due to multiple disabilities (with one of the main areas being orthopedic/ambulatory) either by placing these children in schools with adequate support services or serving the needs of those children whose disabilities were too severe for them to benefit from the school environment. The summarized information was compiled in a document, *Innovation Grants: Results and Lessons Learned*.

### *Subcomponent 3.1: National Guidelines for FSQL*

FSQL was initiated by PEDC under MOET Decision 48 in 2003 as a pilot for PEDC provinces and districts. Although the regulation introduced five categories of assessment criteria, DFA and implementation guidelines were minimal and it did not enable procedures by which to assess schools' attainment of FSQL. As implementation progressed, procedures by which progress towards FSQL were developed and implemented (Section 2.3, *M&E Implementation*).

In September 2007, MOET Decision No. 55 introduced assessment criteria that was rolled-out nationally (not just to schools under the Project) that included specifications for school inspection, DFA verification and resource planning for investment to achieve FSQL. Each of the five categories contained a number of primarily quantitative indicators, based on "yes" or "no" answers. PEDC guidelines on implementing FSQL, however, are based on both quantitative and qualitative indicators or variables (the FII), which are recorded in DFA survey forms. A total of 81 variables are quantified into a score out of 100 and schools assessed as achieving FSQL on the basis of 60 points or more.

Decision No. 55 is being implemented by MOET in coordination between the PED of the MOET and the Examination and General Department of Education and Accreditation. However, guidelines to develop and implement procedures for districts to approve FSQL achievement by schools are not yet published.

District mechanisms for FSQL approval vary between provinces, some based on PEDC FII, some on Decision 55 and some a combination of the two. FSQL will continue to be implemented by MOET, based on Decision 55 and with support from SEQAP for a modified DFA.

### *Subcomponent 3.2: Institutional Strengthening*

The Project provided technical support to MOET and the DoETs in developing the processes and securing the inputs under the Project's first two components through which FSQL could be achieved, sustained and incorporated within relevant institutional frameworks.

The five ISTs established under the Project's management structure (see Section 2.2), played an important role in working with DoETs in strengthening planning and monitoring, supporting teacher development and VLS programs, procurement of goods and materials, monitoring and supervising civil works and mobilizing community participation. The ISTs were coordinated by MOET-appointed representatives, complemented by national and international consultants to build capacity and achieve planned results across the various areas of Project's intervention. For example, the IST responsible for strengthening and monitoring of education quality was responsible for local (province and district) and central level capacity building under Subcomponent 1.1 (FSQL District Management); activities includes the development of planning templates (District FSQL Plans, SDPs), data collection instruments, and programs for training the trainers. Another IST supported activities under Subcomponent 1.2 (Instructional Improvement and Teacher Support for FSQL) by focusing on teacher training and improvements to teaching and learning through development of materials and teachers' guides and the TA, VLS and SR programs. The ISTs played an important role in recording project innovations through manuals, reviews and compilations of experiences, with a view to generating knowledge and providing a vehicle for an exchange of experiences among provinces and districts.

### *Component 4: Project Management*

The Project financed activities of the PCU, including the Project Coordinator and several national and international consultants, as well as operating expenses required for overall project management, administration and supervision, as well as the support the unit provided to ISTs under Subcomponent 3.2 and to the National Task Forces for Quality Standards, Disabled Children and Highly Vulnerable Children.

Hierarchy of Objectives	Key Performance Indicators	Status at Project Completion
<b>Sector-related CAS Goal</b>	<b>Sector Indicators</b>	
The goal of the Government (as expressed in its 2010 Strategy) and the program financiers is to provide a high quality basic education for all children	Improvements in student achievement in Mathematics and Vietnamese, measured every 4-5 years beginning in 2001	Results from the Grade 5 2006/2007 study for PEDC schools showed that students achieving “independent learner” status in Mathematics remained the same while in reading they increased from 51.4% in 2001 to 64.5% in 2006/2007. <sup>17</sup>
	Improvements in student enrollment, completion, repetition and dropout rates	See status at completion under Project Development Objective below
<b>Project Development Objective</b>	<b>Outcome/Impact Indicators</b>	
Improve access to primary school and the quality of education for disadvantaged girls and boys	Participating schools and their satellite campuses in 189 districts will achieve a “fundamental school quality level” (FSQL) by the end of the Project	<b>Partially achieved.</b> According to the DFA, 68% had been reached by 2010. Overall, PEDC schools improved more quickly than the national average and more than the non-PEDC schools in the same provinces. The range was great with some provinces reaching and exceeding targets.
	For participating project districts as a whole: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Net enrollment rate will rise from 81% (1999) to at least 96%, with gender parity</li> <li>• Student completion will rise from 72% (1999) to at least 86%, with gender parity.</li> <li>• Repetition rate will reduce from 8% (1999) to less than 3%, with gender parity</li> <li>• Dropout rate will reduce from 12% (1999) to less than 6%, with gender parity.</li> <li>• Number of eligible disabled children in school will increase.</li> <li>• Disabled children, street children, minority girls and other very high-risk groups of children throughout the country benefit from expanded and innovative approaches to education service delivery.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Net enrollment rate reached 98.7% in 2010 with gender equity (99.6%)</li> <li>• Student completion reached 94.1% in 2010 with gender equity (93.9%)</li> <li>• Repetition rate dropped to 5.2% in 2010, with gender equity (2.5%)</li> <li>• Dropout rate reached 2.5% in 2010 (1.8%)</li> <li>• Disabled children in school has remained at about 2% throughout<sup>18</sup></li> <li>• Through various project-supported initiatives (see text), completion rate for disabled children increased from 45.6% in 2006 to 71.5% in 2009</li> </ul>
<b>Output from each Component:</b>	<b>Output Indicators:</b>	
<b>Component 1: Achieving Fundamental School Quality Level (FSQL)</b>		
Schools serving the most educationally disadvantaged children in the country are better prepared for success	<p><i>By the end of the Project:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ 189 of the most educationally disadvantaged districts plan for and achieve FSQL in all schools and satellite campuses.</li> </ul> <p><i>The inputs required to achieve these goals are:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Professional development provided for approximately 59,000 teachers and head teachers in over 4,200 core school sites and almost 15,000 satellite sites (including</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ All systems for data collection, analysis and planning are in place and operative not only for PEDC districts but nationwide</li> <li>➤ 63,680 teachers have received subject-based training for Grades 1 and 2 in Vietnamese and Mathematics; 95,000 teachers received 5 days of training in Vietnamese Language Strengthening for Ethnic Minorities</li> <li>➤ MOET reports that this target was achieved through Government programs</li> </ul>

<sup>17</sup> The final results for this will only become available from the Grade 5 study in 2011 which is the first time that participants in the PEDC will reach the age where they will be in Grade 5 and be assessed in the Achievement Study.

<sup>18</sup> There were definitional issues with this indicator as “eligible” was not defined in advance, and often teachers have difficulty recognizing, identifying and recording children with special needs.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Vietnamese language preparedness).</li> <li>➤ 25% of unqualified teachers will advance their certification to 9+3.</li> <li>➤ Approximately 15,000 teaching assistants hired and trained for satellite campuses (pending results of a 2-year pilot test of this intervention).</li> <li>➤ At least 9,240 satellite campuses are rehabilitated with permanent classrooms and upgraded facilities, particularly in ways that will make schools more attractive to girls.</li> <li>➤ School-community linkages are strengthened in about 15,000 school campuses.</li> <li>➤ Nearly 40,000 satellite teachers will have a full set of teaching materials and 1,390,000 students Math and Vietnamese textbooks at the start of each school year.</li> </ul>	<p>and attrition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ 7,500 teaching assistants and 7,500 Grade 1 teachers trained</li> <li>➤ 13,141 new classrooms were built at satellite campuses and 6,720 classrooms were renovated at both satellite campuses and main schools</li> <li>➤ Parent Teacher Associations have been established at all schools/satellite campuses and functioning in 99% of the locations</li> <li>➤ 259,062 teacher textbooks, manuals or guides have been provided to teachers, and 3,397,429 textbooks were provided to students.</li> </ul>
<b>Component 2: Education Initiatives for Highly Vulnerable Children</b>		
New partnerships and innovative approaches for improving access and delivering education to the highest risk groups of children are developed and implemented.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ National guidelines for inclusive education children adopted and applied effectively.</li> <li>➤ 40,000 educators trained to work with disabled children and put these new skills into practice.</li> <li>➤ National guidelines for highly vulnerable children adopted and applied effectively.</li> <li>➤ Grants for DoETs, BoETs, schools (and their satellites) or NGOs succeed in expanding or developing innovative programs that address the educational needs of very high-risk children, including ethnic minority girls.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Circular was approved December 29, 2009 and distributed according to MOET procedures.</li> <li>➤ 112,626 teachers in all provinces completed 8 days of training in Child Centered and Inclusive Teaching and Learning; 38,930 teachers in all provinces completed 5 days of training in Overcoming Barriers to Learning; 36,000 teachers completed training in Specialized Skills to Support Inclusive Education.</li> <li>➤ Circular was approved December 29, 2009 and distributed according to MOET procedures.</li> <li>➤ 122 innovation grants were awarded and implemented to address the needs of disabled children, street children, minority girls and other high-risk groups of children.</li> </ul>
<b>Component 3: National and Provincial Institutional and Technical Support for FSQ</b>		
Capacity is strengthened within MOET, DoETs and BoETs to identify, plan for, support, and monitor the needs of educationally disadvantaged children.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ FSQ approach and procedures become mainstreamed into MOET and its line agencies, with support from Government and Party bodies.</li> <li>➤ District and provincial planning is attentive to the needs of disadvantaged children and is based on sound data analysis.</li> <li>➤ Effective monitoring and evaluation process, including EMIS, is developed and applied by MOET, DoETs and BoETs by Year 2.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ All systems for data collection, analysis and planning are in place and operative not only for PEDC districts but nationwide through Government Decision 55 (September 2007)</li> <li>➤ 21,047 Head and Deputy Teachers have received at least 5 days of training on School Development Planning and other key management tasks; Child Development Record training for personnel is integrated with DFA training on an annual basis; 11,289 teachers received decentralized, district based and needs-based training</li> <li>➤ The Department of Planning and Finance at MOET is responsible for DFA/EMIS integration. EMIS is still under development, but MOET decided that SEQAP will continue with the DFA until the EMIS is functional</li> </ul>
<b>Component 4: Project Management</b>		
Project Implementation is efficient, effective and timely	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ PCU and PPCUs provide intellectual leadership and project management.</li> <li>➤ Financial and procurement management procedures are operational throughout the Project</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ PCU and PPCUs coordinated project activities</li> <li>➤ Despite some bureaucratic issues, financial management and procurement procedures were operational throughout</li> </ul>

## Annex 2(b): FSQL Indicators

Combined National Results & for the PEDC Supported Districts		National							PEDC						
FSQL Requirement Description	2004 Data Label	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010
<b>School Sites and Overall FII Composite Index</b>															
Number of Schools	Schools	15 298	15531	15551	15603	15610	15747	15786	4 751	4817	4874	4916	4978	5050	5104
Number of School Sites	Sites	41 150	40283	39467	38839	38250	37796	37034	18 546	18055	17919	17819	17742	17587	17246
Composite FSQI Input Index (FII) to compare overall progress towards achieving FSQI (note *)	FII	62.1	65.0	67.8	68.9	69.6	70.9	71.4	54.0	57.6	60.7	62.4	63.4	67.2	68.3
<b>A: School Organization and Management: Principals and deputy principals</b>															
All principals and deputy principals should be trained in school management skills; have a good understanding of the basic content of state management activities in education and training, primary education objectives and plans, and subject-related matter, syllabus and planning. <b>FSQI-48 only:</b> Principals and Vice-P. should meet the minimum training qualification standard of 12+2	Total PVP	33670	34528	34013	34294	33078	34273	33747	10113	10423	10426	10630	10299	10961	10923
	PVP Train >=5 days	24210	2918	2676	3174	4012	5855	6664	5998	787	817	1240	1568	2644	2004
	% PVP Train	71.9%	8.5%	7.9%	9.3%	12.1%	17.1%	19.0%	59.3%	7.6%	7.8%	11.7%	15.2%	24.1%	18.3%
	PVP Under 9+3	757	497	292	229	173	137	63	402	256	165	143	109	77	61
	PVP 9+3	5130	4602	3635	3042	2437	2002	1640	3253	3011	2467	2130	1753	1498	1239
	% 12+2 or higher	82.5%	85.2%	88.5%	90.5%	92.1%	93.8%	95.0%	63.9%	68.7%	74.8%	78.6%	81.9%	85.6%	89.0%
<b>B: School Organization and Management: Management implementation and effectiveness</b>															
Each school must have a school development plan and measures to implement the plan and monitor progress.	Schools with SDP		8511	7626	6937	8756	7230	8710		2557	2244	1966	2528	2691	3198
	% Schools with SDP		54.8%	49.0%	44.5%	56.1%	45.9%	54.0%		53.1%	46.0%	40.0%	50.8%	53.3%	60.0%
All principals and deputy principals ensure that the quality of teaching, educational services and resources in satellite campuses is the same as in the main campus	Satellites receiving 3 or more	21192	22114	21475	20887	20441	20201	19437	10353	11411	11253	11153	11181	11244	10893
	% Satellites receiving 3 or more	82.0%	89.3%	89.8%	89.9%	90.3%	91.6%	92.0%	75.0%	86.2%	86.3%	86.5%	87.6%	89.7%	92.0%
<b>C: Teaching Staff: Training qualification standard</b>															
All teachers meet the minimum training qualification standard (9+3) and have basic training in working with children from diverse backgrounds, including disabled children. <b>FSQI-48 only:</b> Teachers should meet the minimum training qualification standard of 12+2	Total teacher	361032	359833	347166	342807	323351	345629	337439	113610	111672	108913	107443	96003	109485	104736
	Under 9+3	17620	10986	6375	4717	3310	2689	1951	9030	5184	3202	2367	1641	1457	997
	% 9+3 or over	95.1%	96.9%	98.2%	98.6%	99.0%	99.2%	99.4%	92.1%	95.4%	97.1%	97.8%	98.3%	98.7%	99.0%
	9+3 qualified	83719	78025	67195	58759	46874	43360	35938	52388	50695	46072	40856	32598	31144	25957
	% 12+2 or over	71.9%	75.3%	78.8%	81.5%	84.5%	86.7%	88.4%	45.9%	50.0%	54.8%	59.8%	64.3%	70.2%	76.6%
<b>D: Teaching Staff: Continuing and theme-based in-service training</b>															
All teachers in schools and their campuses should receive at least 5 days of professional training each year on relevant classroom management & pedagogical topics (developing teaching aids, multi-grade teaching, extra remediation, Viet. language strengthening, inclusive education, school-community coordination, etc.)	Total teacher	361032	359833	347166	342807	323351	345629	337439	113610	111672	108913	107443	96003	109485	104736
	Received 5 or more days in-service training	231868	154585	161859	142083	79914	89040	82048	76992	57556	55823	48389	26814	31102	25951
	% Received 5 or more days in-service training	64.2%	43.0%	46.6%	41.4%	24.7%	25.8%	24.3%	67.8%	51.5%	51.3%	45.0%	27.9%	28.4%	24.8%
	in-service training		83153	94833	104122	86322	133263	105675		19395	20945	31522	22073	57806	30044
	% days in-service training		23.1%	27.3%	30.4%	26.7%	38.6%	31.3%		17.4%	19.2%	29.3%	23.0%	52.8%	28.7%
<b>E: Physical Infrastructure: Schools and Classrooms</b>															
The classroom for all main schools and their campuses should be of solid construction (walls, floors and roofs) and with adequate natural lighting. Schools and classrooms must be accessible to	Total CR	216910	223890	221148	222121	222790	225300	230815	70813	70950	69450	69800	70859	72052	73869
	CR OK	140226	136909	143526	150711	155996	163501	158614	35541	34353	36663	39568	43223	46614	46714
	% CR OK	64.7%	61.2%	64.9%	67.9%	70.0%	72.6%	68.7%	50.2%	48.4%	52.8%	56.7%	61.0%	64.7%	63.2%
All schools and their campuses should be located in places that are quiet, dry and accessible to all students. Schools must have no houses and shops inside the precinct area. Schools must have wells or other clean water sources and latrines	Sites with WW	11262	16910	17580	18442	19424	20956	21388	2559	4623	5068	5679	6606	7845	8087
	% Sites with WW	27.4%	42.0%	44.5%	47.5%	50.8%	55.5%	63.2%	13.8%	25.6%	28.3%	31.9%	37.2%	44.6%	50.9%
	Sites with WD	9351	11248	12118	13710	16308	18129	18095	1034	1327	1712	2974	5182	6448	6062
	% Sites with WD	22.7%	27.9%	30.7%	35.3%	42.6%	48.0%	54.9%	5.6%	7.3%	9.6%	16.7%	29.2%	36.7%	36.8%
	Sites with Toilets	14223	15645	16562	17388	18670	20654	21802	3186	3757	4372	5092	6146	7661	8611
	% Sites with Toilets	34.6%	38.8%	42.0%	44.8%	48.8%	54.7%	63.4%	17.2%	20.8%	24.4%	28.6%	34.6%	43.6%	54.1%
<b>FSQI-48 only:</b> All schools and their campuses should separate teacher toilets and a playground	Sites with TT	9079	10379	11391	12370	13529	14910	16076	1628	1968	2372	2860	3695	4730	5358
	% Sites with TT	22.1%	25.8%	28.9%	31.9%	35.4%	39.5%	48.7%	8.8%	10.9%	13.2%	16.1%	20.8%	26.9%	34.9%
	Sites with PG	30539	36370	33993	33679	33336	33220	32856	11408	15593	14355	14375	14507	14613	14472
	% Sites with PG	74.2%	90.3%	86.1%	86.7%	87.2%	87.9%	90.6%	61.5%	86.4%	80.1%	80.7%	81.8%	83.1%	85.6%
<b>F: Physical Infrastructure: Classrooms Equipment</b>															
All classrooms should be equipped with the following: one blackboard, teacher's desk and chair, sufficient desk and chair for students, a (transportable) storage box or locker for instructional materials and teaching aids.	Total CR	216910	223890	221148	222121	222790	225300	230815	70813	70950	69450	69800	70859	72052	73869
	CR with BB Good	74334	110137	127849	202689	210161	217113	229226	8011	17433	21423	56910	61801	32862	68528
	% CR with BB Good	34.3%	49.2%	57.8%	91.2%	94.3%	96.4%	91.2%	11.3%	24.6%	30.8%	81.6%	87.2%	90.7%	92.8%
	CR with TD Good	81529	102901	108982	123529	138014	150590	164939	10979	16757	18417	22522	29976	35738	42669
	% CR with TD Good	37.6%	46.0%	49.3%	55.6%	61.9%	66.8%	71.5%	15.5%	23.6%	26.5%	32.3%	42.3%	49.6%	57.8%
	Standard Student Desks	2838641	3337990	3811258	4195474	4513594	5033211			468538	562118	639836	785732	906183	1114667
	% standard Student Desks		42.3%	50.3%	57.2%	62.8%	66.8%	62.8%		22.0%	27.0%	30.6%	37.0%	42.1%	50.7%
	CR with BS Good	71230	67573	90048	125634	140023	149276	140023	6653	5613	10487	20665	27393	32862	35284
	% CR with BS Good	32.8%	30.2%	40.7%	56.6%	62.8%	66.3%	62.8%	9.4%	7.9%	15.1%	29.6%	38.7%	45.8%	46.5%

<b>G: Basic teaching equipment and aids</b>															
Each school and campus has at the minimum one set of teaching aids and instructional materials per grade (class)	Total Classes	166282	157521	277377	275594	268409	268507	268093	72822	67601	93843	95334	92212	92979	92312
	Classes with R_aids	124290	127095	230515	239584	238146	235739	238625	46005	49766	75839	80151	80245	80825	80533
	% Classes with R_aids	74.7%	80.7%	83.1%	86.9%	88.7%	87.8%	89.0%	63.2%	73.6%	80.8%	84.1%	87.0%	86.9%	87.2%
	Classes with M_aids	124743	126457	232411	241738	240739	237054	240166	46109	49347	76793	81311	81587	81381	81400
Each school and campus has 1 set of supplementary reading materials (SRM)	% Classes with M_aids	75.0%	80.3%	83.8%	87.7%	89.7%	88.3%	89.6%	63.3%	73.0%	81.8%	85.3%	88.5%	87.5%	88.2%
	Classes with R_Supp	73170	72754	149925	145810	149098	158854	162830	15331	17405	35918	34723	37763	46685	47383
Each teacher in every school and campus has 1 set of teacher supplies (ruler, scissors, chalk, paper, pen) at all schools and their campuses.	% Classes with R_Supp	44.0%	46.2%	54.1%	52.9%	55.6%	59.2%	60.7%	21.1%	25.7%	38.3%	36.4%	41.0%	50.2%	51.3%
	Total Teacher	312678	359833	347166	342807	323351	345629	337439	100223	111672	108913	107443	96003	109485	104736
	Teacher have T_supp	257579	288977	295378	286279	268030	285317	285377	82858	90842	92967	93688	82276	95848	90348
Each teacher at every school campus has 1 full set of textbooks, teaching manuals and teacher	T_supp	82.4%	80.3%	85.1%	83.5%	82.9%	82.6%	84.6%	82.7%	81.3%	85.4%	87.2%	85.7%	87.5%	86.3%
	Teacher have T_Guid	291165	274670	291136	279055	262603	279687	277640	91365	87183	93248	92934	80648	92940	86592
	T_Guid	93.1%	76.3%	83.9%	81.4%	81.2%	80.9%	82.3%	91.2%	78.1%	85.6%	86.5%	84.0%	84.9%	82.7%
<b>H: Basic learning materials and aids for students</b>															
Each student has one set of textbooks (mathematics and Vietnamese).	Total Student	8102085	7738947	7278187	7019807	6800991	6724886	6866687	2403994	2249428	2120518	2032722	1957430	1926406	1937738
	Student no SBook	187567	270101	184640	144491	121876	87712	88675	132763	170741	132459	111791	83273	59701	55747
	% Student have SBook	97.7%	96.5%	97.5%	97.9%	98.2%	98.7%	98.7%	94.5%	92.4%	93.8%	94.3%	95.7%	96.9%	97.1%
All students in schools and campuses should be equipped with a minimum set of learning supplies including notebooks and pencils. All ethnic minority students will be provided with Vietnamese language strengthening (VLS) materials.	Student no SStat	97540	163276	112786	120486	79254	75271	58500	74841	115799	87561	101526	62333	58364	36692
	% Student have SStat	98.8%	97.9%	98.5%	98.3%	98.8%	98.9%	99.1%	96.9%	94.9%	95.9%	95.0%	96.8%	97.0%	98.1%
	Total Ethnic Student	1438956	1365489	1296646	1244712	1220144	1221032			953147	911626	867649	827303	811298	751502
	EVL.S	84371	79728	64679	61271	88772	88942			54159	58336	47238	43029	70042	67560
% Ethnic Student have EVL.S		5.9%	5.8%	5.0%	4.9%	7.3%	7.3%		5.7%	6.4%	5.4%	5.2%	8.6%	9.0%	
<b>I: Implementation of Education Socialization Policy: Strengthening organization</b>															
All school campuses establish individual parent associations. (2004 definition Y/N only, 2005	Sites with PTA	33407	14451	33872	35549	35345	35321	34833	13656	5267	16435	17141	17042	17079	16748
	% Sites with PTA	81.2%	35.9%	85.8%	91.5%	92.4%	93.5%	93.4%	73.6%	29.2%	91.7%	96.2%	96.1%	97.1%	96.6%
PA at all schools and campuses carry out regular and efficient activities in terms of cooperating	Sites with..	30712	33419	33676	33625	33984	33693			12682	15624	15809	15963	16322	16109
	% Sites with..	76.2%	84.7%	86.7%	87.9%	89.9%	96.7%			70.2%	87.2%	88.7%	90.0%	92.8%	96.2%
Schools organize propaganda activities in various forms to raise the community awareness	Sites with..	15716	16943	17254	18053	19131	19249			4253	4992	5158	5747	6506	6479
	% Sites with..	39.0%	42.9%	44.4%	47.2%	50.6%	57.8%			23.6%	27.9%	29.0%	32.4%	37.0%	41.3%
<b>J: Education Outcomes: General Regulations</b>															
The National primary school curriculum should be used for teaching and learning in school	Number of Classes	2217	3432	4401	897	6911	1394			1041	1376	1457	427	2522	366
	% Classes	1.4%	2.3%	2.9%	0.6%	4.6%	0.9%			1.5%	2.1%	2.2%	0.7%	3.8%	0.5%
Ensure the implementation of the universal primary completion and illiteracy eradication tasks in localities; develop a plan for right age	Number of site	30529	31382	30837	30991	31848	31675			13455	14123	13973	14310	15019	14982
	% site	75.8%	79.5%	79.4%	81.0%	84.3%	85.7%			74.5%	78.8%	78.4%	80.7%	85.4%	87.0%
<b>K: Education Outcomes Statistics</b>															
Universal Enrolment and Gender Equity, Enrolment of Ethnic Minority Children	Rate (NER)	82.9%	102.9%	100.4%	100.2%	99.8%	100.2%	100.7%	84.7%	101.9%	98.2%	97.4%	97.4%	97.9%	98.7%
	2 Female NER	103.9%	101.4%	101.3%	100.9%	101.3%	101.8%			102.4%	99.0%	98.5%	98.7%	99.2%	99.6%
	3 Ethnic Min. NER	98.2%	95.9%	95.8%	95.5%	96.3%	94.9%			97.0%	95.1%	94.7%	94.4%	94.2%	102.3%
System efficiency: measures that students pass through the primary school system with the minimum of repetition or dropout	(cohort analysis)	93.3%	89.2%	92.5%	89.8%	92.2%	93.3%	93.5%	82.4%	79.6%	83.0%	80.5%	81.7%	85.6%	88.0%
	5 Gr 1 Repetition rate	2.7%	2.3%	1.8%	2.0%	3.4%	3.6%	3.1%	5.4%	5.1%	3.9%	4.3%	6.6%	6.7%	5.2%
	rate (flow rate)	1.1%	0.8%	0.7%	0.9%	2.0%	1.8%	1.4%	2.5%	2.0%	1.7%	1.9%	3.8%	3.4%	2.5%
Within academic year' dropout, comparing enrolment at the beginning and end of the	dropout	1.9%	0.6%	0.9%	0.7%	0.5%	0.5%			4.5%	1.2%	2.0%	1.4%	1.0%	2.5%
	8 Female Gr1-5 'in-	1.8%	0.5%	0.7%	0.6%	0.4%	0.4%			4.0%	1.0%	1.6%	1.1%	0.8%	1.8%
Percentage of Child Population Completing Primary Cycle of Education	Primary Grads.			96.8%	94.8%	97.1%	98.2%	96.0%			92.7%	92.2%	94.8%	96.3%	94.1%
	Prim.Grads.			96.4%	94.6%	95.4%	98.0%	95.9%			91.8%	91.9%	93.6%	95.7%	93.9%
<b>L: Complete or Close By School Sites: (not yet included in FSQI standards)</b>															
education at each site through either single or multi-grade tuition.	Complete	24081	26941	25254	24733	24482	24304	24114	9634	10984	10282	10014	10009	9916	14183
	Comp_per	58.5%	66.9%	64.0%	63.7%	64.0%	64.3%	68.7%	51.9%	60.8%	57.4%	56.2%	56.4%	56.4%	60.6%
All school offer all five grades of primary education at all sites, except if daily travel is possible to a nearby complete campus.	Site	2576	2615	2676	2634	2616	2563			2176	2152	2216	2154	2145	2095
	% Site	6.4%	6.6%	6.9%	6.9%	6.9%	5.3%			12.1%	12.0%	12.4%	12.1%	12.2%	9.2%
Transition of primary curriculum from 175 week with 5 'half -day' sessions/week to 'full day' schooling with 10 'half -day' sessions/week (above FSQI-48 standard, long term policy of	Total Student	7728342	7276464	7017394	6800991	6724886	6870935			2242040	2120017	2032639	1957430	1926406	1937738
	Full-day schooling	24.7%	29.5%	34.1%	36.5%	38.5%	36.8%			7.2%	9.2%	11.9%	15.0%	15.9%	19.1%
	6-9 per week	19.3%	18.9%	19.1%	19.1%	21.0%	24.3%			5.8%	6.4%	8.7%	9.9%	14.1%	20.2%
5 per week (half-day)	55.9%	51.4%	46.8%	44.3%	40.6%	38.8%			86.9%	84.3%	79.5%	75.2%	70.1%	60.7%	

### Annex 3. Bank Lending and Implementation Support/Supervision Processes

#### (a) Task Team members

Names	Title	Unit	Responsibility/ Specialty
<b>Lending</b>			
Christopher J. Thomas	Sr. General Educator	EASHD	Task team leader
Christopher Shaw	Principal Education Specialist	EACVF	
Binh Thanh Vu	Education Officer	EACVF	
Carol Hau-Lai Chen Ball	Proc Accredited Sr. Operations Off	EASHD	
Hoi-Chan Nguyen	Senior Counsel	LEGES	
Luis Benveniste	Education Specialist	EASHD	
Peter Moock	Principal Economist	EASHD	
Behdad Nowroozi	Sr. Financial Management Specialist	EASHD	
Hung Kim Phung	Sr. Disbursement Officer	EAPCO	
Hung Viet Le	Financial Management Officer	EACVF	
Kathy Li Tow Ngow	Program Assistant	EASHD	
Hoai Linh Nguyen Team	Assistant	EACVF	
Chandra Chakravarthi	Team Assistant	EASHD	
Nga Quynh Nguyen	Team Assistant	EACVF	
Sabrina G. Terry	Program Assistant	EASHD	
<b>DFID staff</b>			
Steve Passingham	Senior Education Advisor		
Lindy Cameron	Governance Advisor		
Peter Owen	Senior Governance Advisor		
Peter Balacs	Senior Economic Advisor		
Adam Burke	Sociologist		
<b>CIDA</b>			
Marvin Lamoureux	Ed. Planning, Policy & Adm.		
Bruce Howell	Development Officer		
Camille R. Baudot	First Secretary of Canadian Embassy in Vietnam		
<b>AusAID</b>			
John Scheduling	Education Advisor		
Fiona Tarpey	Program Officer		
<b>Supervision/ICR</b>			
<b>Bank Staff</b>			
Binh Thanh Vu	Sr. Education Specialist	EASHD	Task Team Leader
Sylvester Kofi Awanyo	Lead Procurement Specialist	EAPPR	Procurement
Nguyet Minh Nguyen	Program Assistant	EACVF	Team Assistance
Cesar Palma Banzon	Program Assistant	GSDDDR	Team Assistance
Quynh Xuan Thi Phan	Financial Officer	GEF	FM
An Thi My Tran	Education Spec.	EASHE	Education
Robert J. Gilfoyle	Sr Financial Management Specialist	EAPFM	FM
Hoai Van Nguyen	Procurement Specialist	EAPPR	Procurement
Carol Chen Ball	Consultant	EASHD	Proc. and operation
Ha Thuy Tran	Financial Management Specialist	EAPFM	FM
John Malmberg	Consultant	ECSHD	School construction
Jennifer K. Thomson	Manager, Financial Management	SARFM	FM

Luis Benveniste	Lead Education Specialist	DECWD	Education
Daniel M. Mont	Senior Poverty Specialist	EASPR	Poverty and equity
Charlotte Vuyiswa McClain-Nhlapo	Senior Operations Officer	HDNSP	Inclusive education
Jeffrey Waite	Lead Education Specialist	MNSHE	Education
Rie Kijima	Consultant	EASHD	M&E
Thong Quang Tran	Financial Management Specialist		FM
Niel L Baumgart	Consultant		Education
Linh Van Nguyen	Program Assistant	EAPCO	Team Assistance
Le Viet Hung	Financial Specialist	EAPCO	FM
<b>Non-Bank Staff</b>			
Bridget Crumpton	Education Advisor	DFID	
Maris ORouke	International Consultant	DFID	
Brian Allemekinders	First secretary - Development	CIDA	
Dang Mai Dung	Development Advisor	Norway Embassy- Hanoi	
Le Anh Thao	Education and Social Sector Co	CIDA	
Steve Passingham	Sr. Education Advisor	DFID	
Vo Thanh Son	Sr. Program Officer	DFID	
Marvin Lamoureux	Consultant	CIDA	
Nguyen Hong Giang	Program Advisor	NORAD	
Hildegunn Olsen	Program Officer	NORAD	
Nora Fyles	Education Specialist	CIDA	
Camille Baudot	Staff	CIDA	
Marianne Karlsen	Staff	NORAD	
Bruce Howell	Sr. Development Officer	CIDA	

**(b) Staff Time and Cost**

Stage of Project Cycle	Staff Time and Cost (Bank Budget Only)	
	No. of staff weeks	Total USD (including travel and consultant costs)
<b>Lending</b>	158,31	488 698,3
<b>Supervision/ICR</b>	198,26	778 912,8
<b>Total:</b>	<b>356,57</b>	<b>1 267 611,1</b>

## **Annex 4. Stakeholder Workshop Report and Results**

### **EVALUATION OF PEOPLE’S COMMITTEES OF PROVINCES BENEFITING FROM THE PROJECT**

#### **1. Đồng Tháp province**

“ The project meets important objectives of mobilizing students to school, maintaining regular attendance, decreasing drop-out rate; contributing to enhance management capacity of education managers and renovating teaching methods towards active and individualized teaching for teachers of primary schools; especially helping disadvantaged students, disabled students of satellite campuses in isolated, remote and border areas attend class, to ensure rights and duties of children in accordance with International Convention, and strengthening and mobilizing power, role and responsibility of community in taking care of education development career in local areas.

... Đồng Tháp People’s Committee requests the PCU to consult, propose MOET to continue investing, expanding the project, supporting primary schools in Đồng Tháp (not only 3 districts of the project) to participate in other projects to enhance quality of primary education and develop education development career of the province.”

*Trần Thị Thái – Deputy Manager of province People’s Committee*

#### **2. Bạc Liêu province**

“The project achieved the set targets, including supporting schools to take care of, encourage, help disadvantaged students, poor students, homeless students, ethnic minority students, especially disabled children go to school and complete the primary curriculum; improve infrastructure, enhance teaching and learning quality; support primary schools to achieve FSQL in accordance with Decision No. 55/2007/QĐ- BGDĐT dated 28/9/2007 of the Minister of Education and Training. And the project contributes much to Bạc Liêu province’s result of achieving universalization of school-aged primary education and maintain, consolidate results of universal primary education- anti-illiteracy.

Bạc Liêu People’s Committee expects MOET and donors to continue implementing other new projects in disadvantaged provinces.”

*Vũ Văn Hòa - Deputy Manager of province People’s Committee*

#### **3. Phú Yên**

“The project is implemented in Phú Yên in a timely and considerate manner and achieved good results. Based on monitoring results, quality of teaching and management in the two districts participating the project is enhanced remarkably. Staff and people of the two mountainous areas of Sơn Hòa, Sông Hinh districts are very happy and in favor of activities of the project implemented following guidance of MOET.”

*Lê Kim Anh - Deputy Manager of province People’s Committee*

#### **4. Quảng Bình province**

“Despite many difficulties during the implementation period, effectiveness brought about by the project is very practical in creating conditions and opportunities for development of primary education in the disadvantaged areas, gradually decrease gap in education quality among different areas in the province, contribute to implement equality in education for children, especially disadvantaged areas, which really creates considerable changes in primary education quality in the ethnic minority area of Minh Hóa district, Quảng Bình province.

The province proposes MOET to continue developing other programs, projects to support disadvantaged areas in increasingly approaching general education quality nationwide, meeting requirements for intellectual enhancement, human training for the country’s industrialization and modernization.”

*Nguyễn Đăng – Deputy Manager of province People’s Committee*

## **5. Khánh Hoà Province**

“We appreciate the effectiveness of the project implemented in Khanh Hoa province. Through the criteria achieved in terms of the quality of the two districts, education of Khanh Hoa district is improved and enhanced. With support funding of more than 7 billion of the project, the whole province constructed 48 classrooms, 20 teachers, 19 toilets, and 20 water tanks for 20/64 schools, newly-constructed schools. Especially, Khanh Vinh district was selected as one of three provinces conducting pilot of Exemplary Inclusive Education Service – the mode helps underprivileged children have opportunities to study and benefit from quality learning. The project has facilitated more than 6,000 ethnic minority children in the two mountainous districts of Khanh Son, Khanh Vinh of Khanh Hoa to have opportunities to go to school and benefit from quality learning, minimize the number of drop-out students at the primary cycle. The project conducted training for 100% of primary education managers and teachers of the two project’s districts about pedagogic skills and enhanced awareness of community about education, children are direct beneficiaries, parents and communities aslo indirectly benefit from the project in terms of physical and emotional aspects.

In the period to come, we will use the local budget to continue maintaining sustainability and effectiveness of the project such as enhancing construction of infrastructure of satellite campuses, developing policies on maintaining Teaching Assistants, implementing well school maintenance, strengthening quality of teachers, maintaining exemplary inclusive education service to increasingly increase primary education quality of the province.”

*Lê Xuân Thân – Deputy Manager of province People’s Committee*

## **6. Hà Giang province**

“ The project is one of projects implemented in the province with a long-time implementation, most strict and effective management mechanism.

Infrastructure of satellite sites of the province is improved remarkably, classrooms were built solidly and beautifully.

The project contributed to enhancing management capacity, developing primary school plans for education managers, strengthening teaching capacity and methods for teachers, improving primary education quality; especially quality of Vietnamese teaching and learning, decreasing rate of children with poor learning results, contributing to establish friendly school and active students. The project helps change basically community’s awareness about letting their children to attend class.

After the project ends, the province proposes MOET to continue supporting budget to maintain Teaching Assistant of the satellite sites and equip teaching and learning aids, equipments for students to learn and enhance Vietnamese communication skills for next grades.”

*Nguyễn Văn Sơn – Deputy Manager of province People’s Committee*

## **7. Bình Định province**

“The project’s activities bring about positive effectiveness: most of primary teachers are provided with materials, training, implementation and application of advanced teaching and learning methods. Campus Support Fund supports physically (not by money) for poor and disadvantaged students....contributes to enhancing learning quality, mobilizing students to go to school, consolidating results of school-aged universal primary education. Teaching Assistants cooperate well with teachers in the satellite sites to conduct the School Readiness program for pre-school children; through this program, ethnic minority students have good preparation before entering Grade 1; Teaching Assistants help maintain regular attendance , mobilize students to go to school. With investment scope of 16,5 BVND (103 classrooms were renovated, 58 classrooms, 27 teacher’s rooms, 25 toilets and 27 clean water works were newly built), PEDC contributed much to improving learning environment in the two districts benefiting from the Project. Based on DFA results in 2010, Vĩnh Thạnh district had 10/10 schools achieving FSQ, Vân Canh district had 9/9 schools achieving FSQ – important foundations to help schools develop towards national standard schools.

In spite of many difficulties during the implementation period, effectiveness of the project is very significant. The project contributes to gradually decreasing gap in primary education quality among different areas. And for a central province like Bình Định, the project creates a leverage in enhancing primary education quality in the disadvantaged areas in particular and the education quality of the province in general.”

*Nguyễn Thị Thanh Bình – Deputy Manager of province People’s Committee*

## **8. Quảng Ninh Province**

“Investment results of the project help 100% of satellite sites of 4 disadvantaged districts achieve FSQL fundamentally, creating favorable conditions for teachers and students to enhance teaching and learning quality. The project contributes much to enhancing awareness of community and parents and school-aged universal primary education.

Quảng Ninh province People’s Committee highly appreciates investment effectiveness of the project and continues guiding Department of Education and Training, People’s Committees of disadvantaged districts and cities participating in the project to take advantage of the project’s results to enhance education quality, especially for disadvantaged children.

The province People’s Committee would like to express gratitude to MOET, WB and the PCU for concerning and supporting resources for Quảng Ninh and provide guidance for the province to make use of invested resources, and the province proposes MOET, WB and related agencies to continue creating resources for Quảng Ninh in the coming period.”

*Đặng Huy Hậu – Deputy Manager of province People’s Committee*

## **9. Cao Bằng Province**

“The PEDC Project is a big project of MOET. Thanks to borrowing, donation capital and counter-part fund, the project invested directly into addressing most difficult issues relating to development and renovation of education of Cao Bằng, especially the primary education in the mountainous, isolated and remote areas of the province.

The project’s training activities contribute to strengthening capacity of education managers and teachers, changing awareness about education for different types of students; developing professional development activities for managers and teachers, then gradually improve education quality. Training contents for community help develop community’s awareness, and create opportunities for political and social organizations in the local area to pay more attention to the primary education for disadvantaged children, and education socialization have more practical activities and enhance the primary education.

Provision of equipments, text-books and teaching, learning aids, support of clothes and food for students annually helps decrease difficulties faced by schools and students of satellite sites; increase the number of students attending class, decrease drop-out rate, enhance quality of the primary education.

Teaching Assistant working in the satellite sites is a positive activity to mobilize students to go to school, maintain regular attendance and enhance teaching and learning quality.

*In conclusion*, all activities of the project relating to construction, training, support of satellite sites, classrooms, students help satellite sites in the disadvantaged areas achieve FSQL, create more friendly and favorable learning environment and conditions, then gradually strengthen quality of the primary education in Cao Bằng.”

*Đàm Văn Eng – Deputy Manager of province People’s Committee*

## **10. Kiên Giang province**

“Support of the project for the past years brings about noticeable changes in education quality and school infrastructure of Kiên Giang. Along with concern and efforts to take care of education of authorities, communities and teachers, up to now, education sector of Kiên Giang has been changed positively. Mobilization of children to go to school exceed the set target; rate of 6 year-old children attending class increases year by year; repetition and drop-out rates decrease and the number of students learning 2 sessions per day and 5 sessions per week increases satisfactorily.

Kiên Giang People’s Committee expresses sincere gratitude for the project’s support and will continue directing the provincial education sector to uphold achievements of the project.”

***Đặng Công Huân – Deputy Manager of province People’s Committee***

### **11. Yên Bái province**

“ After 7 years of implementing the project, the achievements gained through the project’s programs has good impacts on education and training effectiveness. Specifically, infrastructure, especially enhancement of satellite sites, managers and teachers are trained about teaching theory and methods that are suitable for disadvantaged children. That disabled children attending inclusive classes has good influences on the society, contribute to conducting the learning right of children; education quality of primary schools has been improved considerably.

We propose MOET to continue directing and providing specific guidance on maintaining Teaching Assistant and VLS programs in the primary schools of the mountainous border areas where have a lot of ethnic minority students after the project ends”.

***Phạm Thị Thanh Trà – Deputy Manager of province People’s Committee***

### **12. Sơn La Province**

“After 7 years of implementing the project in Sơn La, accompanying with other programs and projects that invest into education, the project has positive impacts, education quality and effectiveness are increased gradually, and more sustainably.

Access ability to the primary education of families and communities is enhanced; quality of the primary education of the province is increasingly improved and strengthened, contributing to universal lower secondary education. Sơn La was recognized to achieve universal school – aged primary education standard in 2008. Infrastructure to achieve FSQ has been improved, the number of concretized classrooms increases. And equipments for teaching and learning are basically ensured”.

***Nguyễn Ngọc Toa - Deputy Manager of province People’s Committee***

### **13. Bình Thuận Province**

“After 7 years of implementing the project in the province, Bình Thuận People’s Committee would like to have some comments as follows:

1. Focus on investment into satellite sites and disadvantaged children of the project is completely proper, contributing much to decrease gap in education development among different regions, and create equal learning among different students.

2. Contents, forms and methods of mobilization of communities in setting up and developing education in the local area contribute much to establishing friendly, safe and healthy learning environment, especially through CSF and continue learning until completion of the primary education cycle.

3. Initiative of recruiting TA who supports Grade 1 teachers to teach ethnic minority students is good, which helps the local area partially address Grade 1 learning quality for ethnic minority students.

Bình Thuận People’s Committee proposes the PCU to submit proposal to MOET for scaling-up of some activities after the project ends:

- Recruit TAs for satellite sites that have at least 10 Grade 1 ethnic minority students.
- Maintain “Campus Support Fund” in the disadvantaged areas.”

***Hồ Dũng Nhật - Deputy Manager of province People’s Committee***

### **14. An Giang Province**

“After 7 years of implementing the project in the province, effectiveness of the project is good: training activities about DFA, TA, professional development activities for managers-teachers and

PTA...help enhance management capacity for education management levels in planning and implementing plans, increase knowledge and skills for teachers in the disadvantaged areas and take advantage of role of PTA in supporting inclusive education, school maintenance and beautify teaching and learning environment, support disadvantaged students...

To sum up, investment effectiveness of the project to An Giang is very significant, contributing to strengthening teaching and learning quality of the primary education in the province”.

*Lê Minh Tùng - Deputy Manager of province People’s Committee*

## **15. Long An Province**

After 7 years of implementing the project in the province, the project helps enhance mobilization rate with high results: rate of 6-14 year old enrolled for attending class is 99,2% (increase 2,08%), rate of 6-14 year old attending class is 99,7% (increase 2,585%). Rate of disabled children in the inclusive educations is 72,8% (increase 24,15%). Rate of children with good and excellent performance increases, repetition and drop-out rates decrease, completion rate is rather high (98,6%, increase 2,33% compared to 5 years ago), helping the province achieve completion rate of more than 99%. Disadvantaged districts have 28 schools achieving FSQ (increase 46,6% compared to 5 years ago).

The province People’s Committee would like to express sincere thanks to the PCU, MOET for their valuable, meaning and practical support for the primary education of Long An in general and of 4 districts in particular.

In the coming period, the province People’s Committee proposes MOET to allow the province to continue participating in other education projects of MOET, to help education and training sector of the province have more conditions for development, and contribute to implementing successfully targets of socio-development for the period of 2011-2015 of the province in accordance with the Communist Party’s Resolution.

*Trần Hữu Phước- Deputy Manager of province People’s Committee*

## **Annex 5. Summary of Borrower's ICR and/or Comments on Draft ICR**

### **COMMENTS ON ICR AND RESULTS OF CREDIT AGREEMENT FOR THE PEDC PROJECT**

We agree and highly appreciate the draft report prepared by the World Bank. The report evaluates the implementation and results of the project logically and reasonably.

The PEDC Project is a big project of Government of Vietnam in the education sector in terms of scope, time, budget and beneficiary of the project. The Project helps consolidate achievement of Universal Primary Education – anti-illiteracy as well as enhance quality of universalization, especially ethnic minority students, poor students in the mountainous, isolated areas of Vietnam. The objective of the project is to strengthen access and quality of primary education for disadvantaged children, which create favorable conditions and support Vietnam in implementing targets included in the plan for Education for All of GOV.

MOET received positive evaluation opinions from People's Committees of provinces benefiting from the Project (attached with summary of evaluation opinions of managers of some People's Committees benefiting from the Project). This shows success and high feasibility of investment into the project at local areas.

The Project development objectives are considered strong foundations for enhancing and renovating education quality equally for different types of students, local areas nationwide. MOET will continue sustaining the PEDC Project's initiatives to make them become integrated into policies and mechanisms of the education sector.

We agree with specific performance rating of the World Bank and the borrower at the satisfactory level.

Specific, detailed comments and feedback to supplement and adjust the report is attached.

*Nguyễn Vinh Hiển, Vice Minister of MOET,  
The project National Director*

#### **A- The project implementation**

##### *1- Infrastructure*

- The initial construction phase of the project needed from 18 to 22 months to be completed and handed-over. However, due to changes in civil works procedures and processes in the last period, it took only after from 6 to 8 months to liquidate construction contracts. Basic reasons are as follows:
  - Replace National competitive bidding with 3 quotation method and increase ceiling level of procurement package value.
  - Each civil work contract was paid by 100% of borrowing capital or counter-part fund.
  - Contracts of civil work service are voluntarily paid through school concretization program fund by local areas.
  
- In the period of 2007-2008, because Vietnam was influenced by global economic regression, value of construction works was escalated, which caused many difficulties to contractors. Construction works using GOV capital are compensated for price escalation, but the project's construction work contracts's values were not changed, therefore, thousands of classroom were constructed incompletely, which couldn't meet demands for enough classrooms of schools.

## 2- Counter-part fund

Lack of counter-part fund only happened in the initial period of the project. However, in 2011, Government arranged more than 2 million USD at the same time to pay for contractors in a timely manner. Moreover, the Project refunded 18 billion VND to Ministry of Planning and Investment due to not being used up.

### **B- Implementation of New School Model (VNEN)**

- Although it is the new activity added at the end of 2009, VNEN has been paid due attention to by many entities from education research agencies to local areas conducting the pilot.

- VNEN model is not only adaptive in areas lacking resources and having children who face difficulties in accessing primary education but also paves a new way for reforming education and enhancing quality of school after 2015.

## **Annex 6. Comments of Co-financiers and Other Partners/Stakeholders**

### **From DFID**

John has asked me to provide comments on the draft ICR report. I was involved in the PEDC project design at the beginning but my job was changed and I did not know anything about this project until later last year when I joined a review mission to Cao Bang and was very impressive with the changes this project had brought to primary education in remote and mountainous areas. Congratulations! I have a few comments below:

1. The draft report is very comprehensive. It covers project objectives, what have been achieved and how to make the project achievements sustainable. I however think it would be useful to have an Executive Summary of key achievements and what have not been achieved so a quick skim would give people some flavours of the project because the report is quite long. However I understand this is the World Bank set format and you can not do so but is it possible to make a separate Executive Summary as an additional part?

2. I would like to see the lesson learned part (point 6) to be extended to cover key lessons of the project. The report mentions lots of lessons under the key factors affecting Implementation and Outcomes (point 2) but I would have thought that these lessons (good or bad) should be captured under the final lessons learned session. I also think we need to go deeper here to learn lesson for future: what were the issues and what could have been done to avoid them. For example slow progress at the beginning: was this because of unrealistic targets or because of management issues, if this is the later then what and where i.e. at what level and what could have been done. The problem of slow fund transfer is because of central level, provincial level or district level etc. There might be other bad lessons as well. I remember visited some schools in my trip to Cao Bang where they built toilets but there is no water so it can't be used. They should have built other type of toilets etc.

Point 2.5 on post -completed operation/next steps: Should there be clearer responsibilities and time bound for example funding for DFA under SEQAP: what the project will fund and when it should be done and how to make it sustainable in the long run after SEQAP etc? or the use of training materials or resources developed under PEDC what are MOET/DOET/BOET roles in this process. I remember in my trip to Cao Bang in one district people mentioned about two trainers that were recruited and worked under PEDC and a number of Training Assistants. They did not think at that time that they will be able to use them in future because they don't have money to pay them. If they really want it they surely will find fund somewhere. This is a matter of prioritizing and BOET/DOET could surely do something about that.

Best regards, Hue.

*Nguyen Thi Hue - HR/Office Manager, DFID Vietnam*

### **From CIDA**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the PEDC-ICR. Overall, I find the report to be strong. Some comments on how the report could be improved:

a) include an *Executive Summary* (highlighting key results achieved, lessons learned, and recommendation for the GoV for ensuring sustainability of results in terms of access to education for disadvantaged children)

b) under section 6. *Lessons Learned* - add any relevant lessons learned during the implementation phase (e.g. how to ensure coordination/cooperation within MOET, between other line relevant Ministries)

c) under section 3.2 *Achievement of Outcomes* - highlight any significant variance between expected and actual results

d) Government of Vietnam financial/in-kind contributions - add information on GoV/MOET performance in this area during project implementation

e) It would be also useful for the ICR to make some links with the key points/recommendations in the December Aide Memoire, possibly under the Sustainability section of the ICR

We look forward to the revised ICR. Thank you. Regards, Graham.

*Graham Dattels - Senior Development Officer, CIDA Vietnam*

**From NORAD**

Thank you for sharing with us the draft final report of this important project. Congratulations to the good work of the project team. In line with NORAD's reporting guidelines, it would be useful if the final report could also provide brief description of

- The expected sustainability of the achieved results;
- The risk factors identified before and during project implementation and management, including financial irregularities, corruption, etc. and how these were handled;
- The follow-up of the project, if relevant;
- The project's effects on gender equality;
- If relevant, to what extent the project has collaborated with other relevant educational programmes in the project sites (if any) to maximize the project's impact. For instance, Inclusive Education (for Children With Disabilities) and Mother Tongue-based Bilingual Education (for Ethnic Minority Children) Programmes in Vietnam.

And, Executive Summary with main Findings, Lessons Learnt, and Recommendations would also be very useful.

Thank you very much. Best regards,

*Le T.Thuy Huong - Programme Officer/Development Adviser, Royal Norwegian Embassy in Vietnam*

## Annex 7. Executive Summary

From May 2003 until end 2010, the Government of Vietnam implemented the Primary Education for Disadvantaged Children Project (PEDC, the Project) under the coordination of the Ministry of Education and Training (MoET). The Government counted on financing from the International Development Association (the World Bank, the Bank) in the amount of SDR 101.4 million (equivalent to approximately US\$138.8 million) and from a Multi-Donor Trust Fund between Vietnam and IDA, acting as Administrator of Grant funds provided by the Governments of Australia (A\$1.485 million), Canada (C\$14.355 million), the Kingdom of Norway (NOK113.8 million) and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (£24.7 million) to complement its own financing. Bank policies require that an Implementation Completion and Results Report (ICR) be prepared for each lending operation it finances. This Executive Summary presents the highlights of the ICR. It is not an exhaustive summary of each of the sections of the ICR, but a short summary highlighting the main aspects of the PEDC and its implementation to appreciate and understand those factors that influenced the Project's many achievements, and to learn from them.

### Background

At the time the Project was prepared, Vietnam had made excellent progress in the development of its education system. In the previous ten years, it had met ambitious targets set through its Education for all (EFA) program, raising net enrollment rates at the primary level from about 80-86% in 1990/91 to nearly 94% in 1999/2000. It had also shown good improvement in a number of its internal efficiency indicators, such as repetition and dropout rates. The Government had acknowledged and made a commitment to universal, high quality basic education and had set, and largely achieved, a target of allocating 20% of the national budget to education, and had channeled significant funds from the education budget to nationally targeted programs in poor areas. The National Targeted Program on Education (NTP-E), one of eleven National Targeted Programs<sup>19</sup>, was intended to support the achievement of Vietnam's 2010 Education Strategy and its EFA goals and targets for improved access, quality and efficiency in education services. Support for the education of ethnic minorities and in disadvantaged regions was one of the subcomponents of the NTP-E. Yet, a serious financing gap still existed in disadvantaged areas, and there was an identified need to meet the physical, instructional material and training needs in more than 4,000 schools and 14,000 teaching sites that were below basic standards and received little or no investment support. While the country had met its initial UPE goals of 80% net enrollment in 90% of communes, two large challenges remained: the problems of reaching outstanding communes and the un-reached children needed to be addressed, and the educational quality of the overall system needed improvement to allow it to progressively approach and ultimately meet national and international quality standards. At the ten-year review of its EFA program, Vietnam recognized that there were still many children left behind by the primary system, and that failing to educate all children and failing to educate them to an adequate level of quality would put the Government's plans for UPE, economic growth and poverty reduction at risk.

*World Bank Engagement in Education.* Beginning with the Primary Education Project (PEP) in 1993, the Bank had adopted a comprehensive strategy of support for basic education through progressive engagement. At the time of the Project's approval, three education projects were under implementation, including the PEP, the Higher Education Project and the Primary Teachers Development Project. The Project's design incorporated several lessons from extensive in-country experience related to the pedagogical and language needs of ethnic minority, disadvantage and disabled children under activities supported by donors as well as under the PEP.

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<sup>19</sup> National Targeted Programs are a state budget facility that provide sector-specific frameworks for planning and implementing strategic interventions, and act as focus points to attract community participation and NGO and official donor contributions.

## Project Development Objectives

The objective of the PEDC was to improve access to primary school and the quality of education for disadvantaged girls and boys. Disadvantaged children were broadly defined as school-aged children who were not enrolled or were at risk of not completing primary education; children who attended schools that did not meet fundamental quality standards; and disabled children or children from other highly vulnerable groups, such as street children, migrant children or girls in certain ethnic minority areas. The majority of PEDC resources were to be targeted to 189 districts, where approximately 70% of Vietnam's educationally disadvantaged children resided.

## Target Population

The Project's target population comprised two groups of disadvantaged children:

- Primary school-aged children from the 189 Project (out of 615 total districts in Vietnam) most educationally disadvantaged districts<sup>20</sup>; and
- Disabled children of primary school age and other highly vulnerable groups, such as street and working children, children living in fishing communities, etc.

The absolute number of children in these categories was estimated to exceed two million, and possibly even three million. In addition, the Project's beneficiaries were to include disabled school-aged children (there were an estimated one million in Vietnam, over 70% of which did not have access to school), and children who lived in difficult social conditions, all of which were considered less likely to access, participate and perform well in primary school.

## Project Description

The Project comprised four components, as described below. **Component 1: Achieving Fundamental School Quality Levels (FSQL)** sought to raise all schools in the 189 most disadvantaged targeted districts to a *fundamental school quality level* through a two-pronged approach: (a) by providing necessary support to district administration to improve planning, management and monitoring capabilities, in order to develop and implement plans to meet FSQL standards; and (b) by enhancing school capacity to provide effective instruction at poorly resourced satellite campuses, meeting the specific needs of educationally disadvantaged children and supporting other efforts to meet FSQL standards in those classrooms. **Component 2: Education Initiatives for Highly Vulnerable Children** sought to address the needs of children at high risk through two streams of interventions that addressed the education needs of: (a) disabled children; and (b) vulnerable groups, such as street and working children, children living in fishing communities, and others. **Component 3: National and Provincial Institutional and Technical Support for FSQL** sought to assist the MOET to lay down a pathway for reaching national school standards using FSQL as a first step, proposing FSQL criteria and raising awareness at all levels of the education system about how to bring every school up to FSQL levels. Finally, **Component 4: Project Management** was designed to support the establishment of a Project Coordination Unit (PCU) inside the MOET, that would be staffed with members from various departments of the MOET, domestic and international consultants, and would support MOET line agencies, the institutional strengthening teams and the National Task Forces for Quality Standards, Disabled Children and Highly Vulnerable Children.

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<sup>20</sup> The number of districts that benefited from the PEDC varied due to internal administrative changes that resulted in an increased number of districts in the 40 provinces that were targeted and not from an increase in the Project's scope. By completion, the PEDC has financed activities in 227 districts in the initial 40 provinces.

## **Project Design**

*Instrument.* PEDC was designed as a traditional investment project that provided incremental finance to a new program. It was ambitious in design, especially since it would be implemented in and by the most educationally disadvantaged districts, in most cases those with the most limited capacity. The Project's design envisaged both the development new programs and initiatives, and their subsequent implementation at the district/school level, together with a program of capacity building so that provinces, districts and schools could plan, implement and monitor those activities appropriately. The Project's design encouraged innovation and the piloting of selected activities before eventual roll out to all project districts if they were proven to be successful.

*Implementation Arrangements.* The Project was implemented by the MoET, the DoET, and the Bureaus of BoET. A Project Coordination Unit (PCU) established in MoET and staffed with members from various departments of the MOET, in addition to national and international consultants, supported MOET line agencies, five institutional strengthening teams (ISTs) and national task forces for Quality Standards, Disabled Children and Highly Vulnerable Children with implementation. In line with the Government's decentralization agenda, PEDC was designed to decentralize and shift decision making to local levels (notably districts, schools and their satellite campuses). Although capacity and expertise varied widely among the DoETs and BoETs, this aspect of the design was based on strong evidence that such decentralized planning and service delivery would be far more effective in meeting local needs than centralized strategies for allocating resources. Communities were to have active involvement, often for the first time, by working with District Community Development Specialists (DCDSs).

*Monitoring and Evaluation.* Monitoring progress towards FSQL was an integral objective and focus of the Project's design (see below). Throughout implementation, the PEDC was the subject of intensive evaluation that, *inter alia*, guided the roll-out of activities that had been introduced as pilots, provided useful data and analysis to inform implementation and served to confirm PEDC's results. Eight external evaluation studies were completed under the Project.

## **Project Innovations—Outputs Financed**

*National Guidelines for FSQL.* The Project introduced the concept of FSQL by defining minimum institutional capacity, instructional materials and teacher support, physical infrastructure, and school-community linkages required to maintain a healthy and productive learning environment. FSQL was designed to be an "achievable" standard to which schools in disadvantaged districts could aspire to achieve, as opposed to the national standards that were often considered excessively ambitious given their capacity and realities. PEDC developed procedures and capacity for measuring and verifying progress towards FSQL, based on the District FSQL Audit (DFA). The annual DFA provides year on year performance indicators of school performance against FSQL standards and allows for annual monitoring of a school's, a district's and a province's progress towards achieving FSQL. The DFA has become a highly effective tool for planning and targeting financing and moving towards results-based delivery.

With PEDC support, the DFA has been implemented in all districts nationally. This provides Viet Nam with data on school quality down to the remotest schools and villages and is a unique resource for tracking trends, determining gaps, planning and targeting financing. PEDC was successful in introducing decentralized data systems at district levels and has built capacity and raised awareness on the use and application of information to monitor changes and make FSQL and operational concept (see below). Although the Project originally aimed for data from FSQL/DFA to be integrated into the Government's EMIS, that system is still under development, with the result that the DFA is today the single most important source of educational data nationwide in Viet Nam.

*Annual District FSQL Plans.* Funding for PEDC implementation at the district and provincial levels was made available based on the annual FSQL district plans. A District FSQL Development Planning Manual, an Operational Manual for the Implementation of District FSQL Grants and Campus Support Funds and professional training programs were provided to key staff of DoETs BoETs, Head Teachers

and Deputy Head Teachers to guide school development planning, and the FSQL audit. These professionals now know how to use annual DFA results, have become familiar with analytical skills appropriate to the data, and have recognized the value of standards-based school planning and of integrating FSQL data into annual school plans. School development planning was not part of PEDC's original design but was developed and implemented as a complement to district FSQL planning. It has become an important aspect of the FSQL process and a principle means of capacity development within schools and a key source of monitoring data. Annual District FSQL plans, based on data collected during DFA surveys were developed by BoETs at the end of each year and presented for approval to DoETs, who were responsible for monitoring and evaluation of FSQL implementation and quality improvements at the district level. BoETs in each district collected data for the DFA based on school self-assessment data, and verified results through school inspections. School Development Plans, verified by BoET inspection teams, provided primary sources of data for the DFA.

The End of the Project Evaluation (EOPE) reports: "PEDC has successfully introduced a quantifiable system for primary education data collection, based on the DFA. Data collection systems are in place and annual district plans for FSQL achievement are being developed and implemented by BoETs. Schools are producing SDPs and principles of planning for FSQL are widely understood and adopted at school levels. The DFA enables school quality levels to be ranked and monitored and improvements in school quality standards have been demonstrated over time. Achievement of National School Standards has become a realistic objective for a significant proportion of PEDC schools".

*Instructional Improvement and Teacher Support for FSQL.* District level respondents to the EOPE were invariably positive about PEDC's training programs and felt the programs had made a significant difference to the way teachers teach and resulted in improvements to learning outcomes. Teachers have increased confidence in using new teaching methods and are able to apply a variety of teaching new aids, including adaptation of training materials to different subjects and becoming interested in making their own materials. The training programs have contributed to a change of attitude among school staff, particularly concerning inclusive education but more generally about the roles of teachers and the function of district schools. Combined with the impact of other Project initiatives, parents and communities also have increased interest in the schools and are more confident in the quality of education being received. The EOPE evaluated the Child-based Teaching, Overcoming Barriers to Learning and Vietnamese Language Strengthening programs and confirmed that they addressed well issues of access to education, enrolment and retention, particularly among ethnic minorities. The EOPE evaluated these programs positively, with "teachers reporting adoption of new teaching methods resulting in improved learning outcomes".

*Vietnamese Language Strengthening (VLS), School Readiness (SR) and Teaching Assistants (TA).* The external evaluation of the VLS, TA and SR programs shows very promising findings and the value of these interventions<sup>21</sup>. The evaluation's main findings corroborate that students in classes with a TA attend more regularly and achieve better results in mathematics and Vietnamese language than those students in similar classes without a TA. The study found that "In surveyed districts, the TA program has made significant contributions in preparing children for school through Vietnamese language acquisition under the SR program. In disadvantaged areas without ethnic minority teachers, or without ethnic language speaking teachers, TAs also play a pivotal role in enabling schools and satellite campuses to meet minimal quality standards. BoETs and teachers were also consistent in reporting to the evaluators the improvements to learning outcomes at Grade 1, and describing the SR program as providing a "big leap" in improving ethnic minority students' Vietnamese capacity and in making them more confident when starting school. SR clearly has a positive effect on the learning of ethnic minority students in Grade

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<sup>21</sup> Mid-term Report "Longitudinal Study on Teaching Assistants and School Readiness" April 2009

1. The TA program has contributed to increasing enrollment rates, mobilizing school-aged children to attend class and maintain regular attendance and, as a result, decreasing repetition and drop out rates. TAs have not only helped teachers, but have played an important role as a language and culture bridges between school, family, and community and helped change local people's awareness about their children's learning. Parents and community members have developed trust in TAs and schools. TAs have also supported individuals with special needs and children with disabilities.

*Infrastructure Improvement for FSQL.* Infrastructure, including civil works, provision of furniture and related technical services accounted for the PEDC's largest component. By completion, 6,126 schools had benefited from the PEDC, 12,383 new classrooms had been constructed, and 6,720 had classrooms had been renovated or upgraded. Additional sites and classrooms benefited from assistance from the Government's School Concretization Program. PEDC was the first project to provide investment for school construction at satellite sites of primary schools. The infrastructure program was completed as planned, carried out efficiently and completely implemented through decentralization to DoETs and primary schools. Teachers', parents' and commune leaders' perceptions about the PEDC schools is overwhelmingly positive. More than 97% agreed that the upgraded campus was more beautiful and attractive, encouraged children to attend school, more child-friendly and conducive to learning. There was a strong sense of ownership and they are willing to share in the maintenance of the building. Overall, more than 96% of beneficiaries agreed they are happy with the Project.

*Community Participation.* The CSF was another highly successful innovation. The CSF encouraged parent and community engagement while ensuring that funds would be allocated to particular schools' and students' needs. Annual CSF grants were provided to schools and satellite schools to help with small purchases, support some educational activities as well as enhance community participation in school activities, based on the schools determination of needs. CSF grants provided support for helping disadvantaged children to go to school, overcoming difficulties in the class, activities related to the SR program such as teaching and learning materials and aids and extracurricular educational activities with community participation. The CSF produced many benefits, including supporting children to go to school and attend class regularly, supporting schools and satellites to reach FSQL, and strengthening community participation through activities and planning and using CSF.

*Inclusive Education for Disabled Children.* A draft National Inclusive Education (IE) Policy, Strategy and Action Plan on IE was developed and is pending approval as part of the Government's Strategy for Education and Training 2009-2020. As part of the training program, 240 key teachers in 40 provinces were trained on Inclusive Education using the revised *Education of Children with Learning Difficulties* materials and *Exemplary Inclusive Education Series Initiative (EIES)*.

*Reaching Street and Working Children and Other High Risk Groups.* The PEDC supported activities aimed at reaching street children and working children and other high-risk groups, in a decentralized manner, and knowledge sharing of these activities. Innovation Grants provided local solutions to local problems by local people in innovative way to: (a) develop and implement new and innovative approaches to meeting the educational needs of vulnerable children of primary school age; (b) encourage and facilitate the participation of government, non-government and other stakeholder groups in serving the needs of at-risk and highly vulnerable children; and (c) try-out quality interventions that could be applied widely, potentially nationally, to reduce the number of at-risk and highly vulnerable children who were not accessing and/or completing primary education.

## **Project Results**

The PEDC's most notable achievement was the development and introduction of the FSQL as a first step towards helping disadvantaged districts to plan, monitor and report progress in achieving defined educational standards and the collection of DFA data since 2004. FSQL has been successfully utilized as a mechanism to measure quality levels across schools and to allocate resources according to need to raise schools and their satellites up to minimum FSQL standards. The FSQL and the DFA have proven to be successful initiatives that have been expanded to the national level, allowing the Government to allocate need-based funding at the national, provincial, district and school levels. The importance of education

management and how to structure what is happening in schools and classrooms to achieve a better quality of education and improve students' learning achievements is now more widely understood. All DoETs and BoETs have mastered the data-collection skills and they skillfully use data to identify FSQ gaps, create School Development Plans, allocate funds, target those who need it most, support communities and monitor progress.

The Project directly supported the provision of the inputs needed for schools and districts to reach FSQ that have been shown to produce a quality education and an environment for learning and to help increase the number of children attending school and the likelihood of their staying until completion. These include: a safe, appropriate building with inside-outside flow and activities, trained teachers, basic equipment and furniture, basic textbooks, a rich range of supplementary resources in local languages where needed, and a committed participating community ensuring healthy motivated children attend school.

The PEDC produced important results, in many cases exceeding original expectations.

- **Increase in number of PEDC schools reaching FSQ.** In 2004 54% of schools in PEDC districts had achieved FSQ, as originally defined. By 2010, 68.3% of schools had reached FSQ as defined by the Government's Decision 55. Overall, PEDC schools improved more quickly than the national average and more than the non-PEDC schools in the same provinces. More importantly, several of the schools that had achieved FSQ reported that they now feel energized and empowered to continue their efforts, striving towards the achievement of national standards.
- **Increase net enrollment rate.** The net enrollment rate in PEDC districts reached 98.7% in 2010, with gender equity, against the target of 96%.
- **Improve primary student completion.** Primary student completion in PEDC districts reached 94.1% in 2010, with gender equity, against the target of 86%. (In 2009, female completion rates in PEDC districts were 93.9%, compared to a national rate of 95.9%.)
- **Reduce Grade 1 repetition rate.** The Grade 1 repetition rate in PEDC districts was 5.2% in 2010 against a target of less than 3%. Although this represented an improvement over the 8% rate before the Project, this indicator likely fell short of its target due to a new campaign launched by the MOET two years ago to address a problem where teachers apparently passed automatically all of their students to higher grades. (Overall primary repetition rates stood at 2% for PEDC districts in 2010 and 1.4% nationwide.)
- **Reduce dropout rate.** The dropout rate in PEDC districts declined to 2.5% in 2010 against a target of less than 4%. In PEDC districts, the dropout rate in Grades 1 to 5 was 1.8%. Respondents attributed reduced dropouts to the impact of related PEDC activities, specifically, TA support and mobilizing campaigns, participation by PTAs, the CSF, and provision of books and notebooks for disadvantaged children and the overall raised attractiveness of schools. Reduced language barriers are also supposed to have contributed to consistent improvements for this indicator.
- **Increase the number of eligible disabled children in school.** This has remained at about 2% of children throughout. There have been definitional issues as "eligible" was not defined and work with the Child Development Record (CDR) showed that teachers have difficulty recognizing, identifying and recording children with special needs. (DFA data on disability is limited, does not provide for classification of disabilities and probably under-reports numbers of disabled children who are out of school). The Analysis of 2007/08 CDR-sourced data recommended the 2009 DFA include specific sources of data relating to children with disabilities. This has not yet occurred.
- **Improve completion rate for disabled children.** In 2006 the completion rate for disabled children was 45.6%; by 2009, the completion rate reached 71.5 %.
- **Improve "independent learner" status in Mathematics and Vietnamese.** The results for this will come from the Grade 5 study in 2011 that is the first time that participants in the PEDC will reach the age where they will be in Grade 5 and be assessed in the achievement study. The results from the Grade 5 2006/2007 study for PEDC schools showed that although students reaching "independent learner" status in Mathematics remained the same, in Reading they increased from 51.4% in 2001 to 64.5% in

2006/2007<sup>22</sup>. The Quality of EFA Report<sup>23</sup> reviews the most significant predictors of student achievement based on sample results for 2001 and 2007 Grade Five surveys. Some of its findings that are relevant to the Project's outcomes include: (a) the FII is a significant and positive predictor of student achievement in the 2007 studies; (b) teacher education and training (included in the FII) was a very significant predictor of mathematics achievement; (c) the availability of classroom materials/learning tools is a significant predictors of achievement, and the most important variable is the FII as the indicator of overall school inputs (the FII effect on learning achievement in the 2007 study is substantial); (d) for schools in remote areas, school averages for teacher feedback is the strongest predictor of achievement, possibly since these students have less access to learning aids and feedback outside the school; and (e) for ethnic populations, the FII and teacher excellence are especially important predictors of outcomes, since these students are less likely to receive help in the home, and are exposed to fewer non-school sources of learning. These findings all point to probably strong improvements in learning outcomes as a result of the initiatives supported by the Project.

The Project also had impact at the sector level. By decreasing repetition rates dropout rates in PEDC province, the Project had an important impact on pupil flow-through efficiency, promoting much improved efficiency at the primary level. The Project had another, perhaps equally if not more important impact on sector efficiency: developing and implementing a functional system whereby allocation of resources is determined on the basis of needs and capacities as determined by local schools and districts—moving from input-equity to output-equity through a system of evidence-based funding. The development and implementation of FSQL, that defined the *minimum* package of inputs necessary for providing a quality education at a school together with the basic outcomes that were expected of schools, was an efficiency-enhancing concept.

### **Project Sustainability**

The Project, its objectives and the activities is financed are fully consistent with the Government's Education Development Strategic Plan for 2011-2020 which is currently in the process of consultation and its NTP-E which both continue to emphasize the objectives supported by the Project. Recognizing that these important programs (FSQL, TAs, VLS, SR, etc.) should be continued, the Government and the Bank began discussing transition arrangements over two years before completion and developing proposals to provide continuity to PEDC's successful initiatives with Government or alternative sources of funding. As a compensatory mechanism, the Project has been completed, and the challenge of continuing to respond to the needs of disadvantaged groups will depend on the Government's ability to internalize the many successful innovations and lessons from its implementation. This will require not only adopting and mainstreaming monitoring systems, training programs, community initiatives, etc., but also ensuring that the funding provided under the NTP-E to provinces and districts responds to their needs and the results of their efforts, and that they are sufficiently supported in providing continuity to the successful initiatives supported by PEDC.

Several mechanisms exist whereby continuity can be provided for PEDC's successful initiatives, including under projects that are currently ongoing or under preparation for eventual Bank financing: the School Education Quality Assurance Project (SEQAP) and the proposed School Readiness Promotion Project (SRPP), in addition to through normal government funding channels under NTP-E, a centrally sponsored scheme in which the MOET indicates to the provinces the expected allocations of central State budget funds to NTP-E sub-components. However, provincial authorities have full discretion over planning, investment and resource allocation. Schools and districts, and more importantly children and their parents and teachers, have witnessed the Project's activities and impact, and will undoubtedly become important advocates vis-à-vis the provinces for continuity of activities such as SDPs, TAs, SR

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<sup>22</sup> Report Study in Grade 5 Student Achievement in Mathematics and Vietnamese Language in the 2006-2007 School Year, Hanoi, 2008.

<sup>23</sup> Vietnam Quality of All Report (draft) World Bank. The Report, Chapter 7 of the Report analyzes "The Variable That Matter: Determinants of Student Achievement.

programs through sustained allocations through their NTP-E budget. Nevertheless, the Government's EMIS is still not in place, and as a result the substantial information in the DFA could not be integrated in that system and will require a continued "bridging" under the SEQAP to maintain it up-to-date and relevant as a policy and planning tool. Legal, policy frameworks are not in place for TA and SR programs, with the result that these also will depend on alternative project funding, or requests—or community demands—from the schools/districts for continuity of these programs. Still, to the extent that provinces decide to continue implementation of these programs, funding will need to be provided either under SEQAP or SRPP, or framed within the overall provincial/district budget allocations under NTP-E. In some cases, this is already happening as a number of provinces and districts are already implementing FSQL plans from their own budget.

## **Project Lessons**

The Project provides several lessons related to education policy, instrument design and institutional arrangements.

### *Education Policy:*

The concept of quality of education is a dynamic concept that evolves over time. The evolution and development of education quality should be defined and formed to respond to a specific country or socio-economic and cultural context at a certain period of time. Therefore, setting up an FSQL that matches the education system's implementation and financial capacity was critical to ensure its relevance and usefulness. The FSQL was a successful innovation that provided a "ladder" to national standards by setting a realistic and attainable target for disadvantaged schools and has since become national policy and implemented in all provinces. Most importantly, it provides standards for a needs-based targeted allocation of funds and real data to schools on what to spend it on in order to reach the standards. In terms of setting standards, the Project set FSQL as the minimum standards that a school should have in place to provide a basic learning environment. Many schools that have attained FSQL feel successful and empowered, and as a result, are setting new, higher, targets to eventually achieve national standards. Caution, however, should be taken when seeing progress towards initial minimum standards, and using this as an opportunity to increase standards (as was done by the Government's Decision 55). The value of fundamental quality standards, as originally defined in simple, easy to follow and monitor terms, is that they were seen as achievable by the provinces, districts and schools targeted by the Project.

Of all the standards, schools were most challenged by FSQL requirements for physical infrastructure. Where these targets are unrealistic and difficult to achieve, provision should be made for FSQL certification based on other more manageable criteria, specifically including the quality of teaching and learning, as is currently provided for by the FII.

Initiatives that strengthened the ties between schools and communities proved to be very successful in improving educational outcomes. These included the SR initiative a community-based, pre-primary school development program introduced to strengthen Vietnamese language competencies in districts with significant ethnic minority populations, where Vietnamese is spoken as a second language and support transition from pre-school to Grade 1, and the introduction of TA. TAs, bi-lingual members of local communities had primary responsibility for implementation of SR programs, under the coordination of satellite school and Grade 1 teachers. The initial pilot and later expansion of the TA initiative was successful in creating a link between Grade 1 teachers at satellite campuses, to support delivery of the SR program, and their work with families and communities to mobilize children in coming to school and to help ensure attendance. In disadvantaged areas without ethnic minority teachers, or without ethnic language speaking teachers, TAs also played a pivotal role in enabling schools and satellite campuses to meet minimal quality standards. TAs not only helped teachers, but played an important role as a language and culture bridges between school, family, and community and helped change local people's awareness about their children's learning, with consequent positive outcomes. As mentioned in Section 2.5, funding for several of these initiatives is expected to be sustained by provinces with funding under the framework of the NTP-E 2011-2015.

### *Instrument Design:*

The Project was designed as a traditional investment project, providing incremental finance to a project with specific time-bound objectives that were expected to be achieved in targeted districts by completion. Its institutional arrangements were designed to facilitate and ensure the Project's effective implementation, but institutional strengthening on a national scale over and above that which would be required for successful implementation was not an explicit objective of the Project (although there was an indicator that expected the MOET, and participating DoETs and BoETs to have regularly demonstrated strengthened capacity to identify, plan for, support and monitor the needs of educationally disadvantaged children). Nevertheless, the Project's positive outcomes brought a critical challenge: how to ensure that the initiatives introduced under the Project are not only maintained upon completion (e.g., the schools constructed maintained, the learning materials utilized, etc.), but also expanded, internalized and adopted as national policies more broadly. As a quasi-compensatory project, aimed at leveling outcomes in disadvantaged districts, the Project's design was contained, and it achieved mostly its expected objectives. But, given that, despite progress, there are still important differences in educational outcomes across schools, should this "compensatory" financing terminate now that the Project has been completed? The Bank's supervision team worked closely with the Government well in advance of completion to ensure sustainability of the Project's initiatives, with the objective of ensuring continued implementation of proven initiatives thereby further reducing the gaps in outcomes between schools in disadvantaged districts and other schools. Still, in retrospect, the question remains as to whether support for an ongoing program coordinated directly by the MOET through its technical departments (as opposed to through the PCU), and directly through the DoETs (as opposed to through the provincial PCUs) would not have provided greater sustainability and internalization of the very capacity that the Project helped develop.

Several other aspects of the Project's and instrument's design were effective, especially, the piloting of innovative activities and their evaluation before expansion, as well as building into the Project's design activities that were central to the Project's objectives such as the development and dissemination of FSQI standards and guidelines. In addition, the Project's design was such that it was well-defined, but still sufficiently flexible to allow creativity and minor adjustments based on provincial, district and school needs, that were all so important to ensure that its outputs and results responded to local realities. At the same time, this mix between up-front design and definition versus flexibility resulted in the continued relevance of the Project's objectives, components and activities throughout implementation without the need for their restructuring.

### *Institutional Arrangements:*

Given that the Project's implementation was coordinated by a Project Coordination Unit, with the consequent issues that structure entailed for sustainability of institutional capacity that was developed, its structure was effective for implementing project activities. The establishment of ISTs for planning and monitoring, teacher development activities, educational goods and materials, civil works and community participation, ensured effective leadership, coordination, technical support and knowledge sharing between the MOET, the PCU, the DoETs and the BoETs. The involvement of schools, communities and parents in the Project's activities ensured "bottom-up" engagement and support for the initiatives and activities financed, and bode well for continued demand for its successful programs and initiatives.

## **Annex 8. List of Supporting Documents**

2. Project Appraisal Document, Primary Education for Disadvantaged Children Project, Report No. 23846-VN, dated April 3, 2003
3. Implementation Status Reports and Mission Aide-Memoires
4. Report of the Joint World Bank-Donors Mid-Term Review (MTR) with Australia (AusAID), Canada (CIDA), Norway (NORAD) and United Kingdom (DFID), December 4-20, 2006
5. Primary Education for Disadvantaged Children Project, End of Project Evaluation, Final Report, September 2010, Consia Consultants
6. External Evaluation Completed under the Project:
7. CSF and District Grants (December 2006)
8. Pilot School Readiness (December 2007)
9. Pilot Teaching Assistant and School Readiness Programs (April 2007)
10. Training Review and Need Analysis (December 2008)
11. Evaluation of PEDC Investment in Non-Infrastructure Activities (April 2009)
12. Longitudinal Study on Teaching Assistant Program (December 2009)
13. Vietnam Quality for All Report (draft) World Bank, chapter 7 of the report analyzes “The variable that matter: determinants of student achievement.

## **Annex 9. Fundamental School Quality Level (FSQL) Standards**

The FSQL standards, as described in the Project's Appraisal Document, are:

### *Physical Infrastructure:*

- Schools and campuses have solid construction (walls, floors and roofs) for classrooms and with adequate natural lighting
- Schools and campuses have 1 blackboard per classroom, sufficient tables and benches for students, 1 teacher desk/chair per classroom, and sufficient durable and transportable storage boxes or lockers for instructional materials

### *Teaching Staff:*

- Teachers are minimally qualified at 9+3 level
- Teachers receive annual professional training on relevant classroom management and pedagogical topics (e.g., crafting teaching aids, multi-grade teaching, remediation support, Vietnamese language instruction, inclusive education, etc.)

### *School Organization and Management:*

- A school ensures that each satellite campus offers the same quality of instruction, services and resources as the main school site
- Schools and campuses offer grades based on full 175 week curriculum
- Head Teachers are trained in satellite campus management and support

### *Education Socialization:*

- Schools and campuses have individual parent committees
- Parent committees at all schools and satellite campuses are trained in school and student support strategies

### *Educational Activities and Quality:*

- 1 set of teaching aids/instructional materials per grade is available to each school and campus
- 1 set of teacher supplies is available to each teacher (e.g., ruler, scissors, chalk, paper, pen) in all schools and campuses
- 1 full set of textbooks, a teaching manual, and other guides as required per grade taught is available to each teacher
- 1 set of supplementary reading materials appropriate to all grades taught is available to each school and campus
- All students have Math and Vietnamese textbooks
- All students are equipped with a sufficient (minimum) number of notebooks and pencils
- All teachers in ethnic minority areas are trained in teaching Vietnamese to children whose native language is not Vietnamese
- Special Vietnamese language materials are available in all schools and campuses with ethnic minority populations

### *Expected Outcomes*

- All school age children are enrolled in school
- 96% of 14-year olds complete primary education
- Gender equity is achieved in primary school enrollments

## Annex 10. List of Project Provinces & Districts

	Province	District		Province	District		Province	District		Province	District
1	Hà Giang	Hà Giang Town	61	Điện Biên	Mường Chà	114	Đắk Lắk	Ea H'leo	172	Đồng Tháp	Tân Hồng
2		Đông Văn	62		Tủa Chùa	115		Ea Súp	173		Tam Nông
3		Mèo Vạc	63		Tuần Giáo	116		Krông Năng	174		Thanh Bình
4		Yên Minh	64		Điện Biên	117		Krông Búk		<b>Total:</b>	3 district
5		Quản Ba	65		Điện Biên Đông	118		Buôn Đôn	175	An Phú	
6		Bắc Mê	66		Mường Nhé	119		M'Đrắk	176	Châu Phú	
7		Hoàng Su Phì	67		Mường Ảng	120		Krông Pắc	177	Tĩnh Biên	
8		Vị Xuyên			<b>Total:</b>	7 district		121	Cư Kui	178	Trị Tôn
9		Xín Mần	68		Thanh Hóa	Mường Lát		122	Krông A Na	179	Châu Thành
10		Bắc Quang	69			Ngọc Lặc		123	Krông Bông	180	Thoại Sơn
11		Quang Bình	70			Thường Xuân		124	Lắk		<b>Total:</b>
	<b>Total:</b>	11 District	71		Như Xuân		<b>Total:</b>	11 district	181		Rạch Giá
12	Cao Bằng	Bảo Lạc		<b>Total:</b>	4 district	125	Đắk Nông	Cư Jút	182	Kiên Giang	Kiên Lương
13		Hà Quảng	72	Nghệ An	Quế Phong	126		Đắk Mil	183		Hòn Đất
14		Thống Nông	73		Tương Dương	127		Krông Nô	184		Tân Hiệp
15		Trà Lĩnh		<b>Total:</b>	2 district	128		Đắk R'Lấp	185		Châu Thành
16		Trùng Khánh	74	Quảng Bình	Minh Hóa	129		Đắk GLong	186		Giồng Giếng
17		Nguyên Bình		<b>Total:</b>	1 district	130		TX Gia Nghĩa	187		Gò Quao
18	Hạ Lang	75	Quảng Trị	Hương Hóa	131	Đắk Song	188	An Biên			
19	Thạch An	76		Đa Krông	132	Tuy Đức	189	An Minh			
20	Bảo Lâm		<b>Total:</b>	2 district		<b>Total:</b>	8 district	190	Vĩnh Thuận		
	<b>Total:</b>	9 district	77	Thừa Thiên -	Phủ Lộc	133	Lạc Dương	191	Phú Quốc		
21	Lào Cai	Lào Cai	78		Nam Đông	134	Lâm Hà	192	Kiên Hải		
22		Mường Khương		<b>Total:</b>	2 district	135	Bảo Lâm	193	U Minh Thượng		
23		Bát Xát	79	Quảng Nam	Đông Giang	136	Đi Linh	194	Thị xã Hà Tiên		
24		Bắc Hà	80		Nam Giang	137	Đam Rông		<b>Total:</b>	14 district	
25		Sa Pa	81		Phước Sơn		<b>Total:</b>	5 district	195	Cần Thơ	Thốt Nốt
26		Bảo Yên	82		Bắc Trà My	138	Ninh Thuận	Phan Rang-Tháp Chàm	196	Vĩnh Thạnh	
27	Xi Ma Cai	83		Nam Trà My	139	Ninh Sơn			<b>Total:</b>	2 district	
28	7 district	84		Tây Giang	140	Ninh Hải		197	Châu Thành		
29	Ba Bè		<b>Total:</b>	6 district	141	Ninh Phước		198	Cầu Kè		
30	Ngân Sơn	85	Quảng Ngãi	Trà Bồng	142	Bác Ái		199	Tiểu Cần		
31	Pắc Nặm	86		Sơn Tây	143	Thuận Bắc		200	Cầu Ngang		
	<b>Total:</b>	3 district	87	Sơn Hà		<b>Total:</b>	6 district	201	Trà Cú		
32	Lạng Sơn	Tràng Định	88		Ba Tờ	144	Bình Phước	Đông Xoài	202	Duyên Hải	
33		Văn Lăng	89		Tây Trà	145		Phước Long		<b>Total:</b>	6 district
34		Bình Gia		<b>Total:</b>	5 district	146		Lộc Ninh	203	Sóc Trăng	
35		Cao Lộc	90	Bình Định	Vĩnh Thạnh	147		Bù Đăng	204	Kế Sách	
36		Lộc Bình	91		Vân Canh	148		Bình Long	205	Long Phú	
		Đình Lập		<b>Total:</b>	2 district	149		Đông Phú	206	Mỹ Tú	
	<b>Total:</b>	6 district	92	Phú Yên	Sơn Hòa	150	Chon Thành	207	Mỹ Xuyên		
37	Tuyên Quang	Nà Hang	93		Sông Hinh	151	Tây Ninh	Bù Đốp	208	Thạnh Trị	
	<b>Total:</b>	1 district		<b>Total:</b>	2 district			<b>Total:</b>	8 district	209	Vĩnh Châu
38	Yên Bái	Lục Yên	94	Khánh Hòa	Khánh Vĩnh	152		Tân Biên	210	Cù Lao Dung	
39		Mù Cang Chải	95		Khánh Sơn	153		Tân Châu	211	Ngã Năm	
40		Trạm Tấu		<b>Total:</b>	2 district	154		Bến Cầu		<b>Total:</b>	9 district
		<b>Total:</b>	3 district	96	Kon Tum	Đắk Gle			<b>Total:</b>	3 district	212
41	Quảng Ninh	Bình Liêu	97		Ngọc Hồi	155	Đông Nai	Tân Phú	213	Hồng Dân	
42		Móng Cái	98		Đắk Tô	156		Định Quán	214	Vĩnh Lợi	
43		Tiên Yên	99		Kon Plông	157		Xuân Lộc	215	Giá Rai	
44		Ba Chẽ	100		Đak Hà	158		Cầm Mỹ	216	Đông Hải	
	<b>Total:</b>	4 district	101		Sa Thầy		<b>Total:</b>	4 district	217	Phước Long	
45	Lai Châu	Tam Đường	102		Kon Rẫy	159	Bình Thuận	Tuy Phong	218	Hòa Bình	
46		Than Uyên	103		Tu Mơ Rông	160		Bắc Bình		<b>Total:</b>	7 district
47		Mường Tè		<b>Total:</b>	8 district	161		Hàm Thuận Bả	219	Cà Mau	
48		Phong Thổ	104	Gia Lai	KBang	162		Hàm Thuận Nà	220	Thới Bình	
49		Sìn Hồ	105		Chư Păh	163		Tánh Linh	221	U Minh	
50		TX Lai Châu	106		la Grai	164		Hàm Tân	222	Trần Văn Thời	
	<b>Total:</b>	6 district	107		Đức Cơ	165	Đức Linh	223	Cái Nước		
51	Sơn La	Quỳnh Nhai	108		Chư Prông	166	Long An	Phú Quí	224	Đầm Dơi	
52		Mường La	109		Chư Sê	167		Thị Xã La Gi	225	Ngọc Hiển	
53		Thuận Châu	110		Phú Thiện			<b>Total:</b>	9 district	226	Năm Căn
54		Bắc Yên	111		TX Ayun Pa	168		Tân Hưng	227	Phú Tân	
55		Phù Yên	112		Krông Pa	169		Vĩnh Hưng		<b>Total:</b>	9 district
56		Mai Sơn	113		La Pa	170		Tân Thạnh			
57		Sông Mã		<b>Total:</b>	10 district	171		Thanh Hóa		<b>Grand Total</b>	227 district
58		Yên Châu						<b>Total:</b>	4 district		
59		Mộc Châu									
60		Sốp Cộp									
	<b>Total:</b>	10 district									

# MAP

