

## International Conference

16–18 October 2007 • Asian Development Bank, Manila, Philippines

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**Regional Study on ICT in Basic Education, Central Asia**

### ***Financing ICT in Basic Education – Policy and Strategy Options for Affordable and Sustainable Investments***

This presentation reviews the current research knowledge on the Total Costs of Ownership of the use of ICT in education and concludes that despite increasingly large investments by many developing and transitional economies in ICT for schools very little hard information exists about the real costs of ICT use in education. Nor is there very much information on cost effectiveness nor on the opportunity costs.

The presentation then reviews the current available information on the TCO of ICT in Basic Education in the 6 Central Asian countries and concludes that 5 out of 6 countries have no clear idea of the cost implications of their investments and that the sixth (Uzbekistan), although aware of the need to ascertain true costs, is still only at the initial stages of this exercise.

The paper characterizes the different cost categories and gives examples of these costs from different countries. It concludes that all Central Asian countries, in common with many other developing and transitional economies currently investing in ICT for education is largely concerned with initial hardware costs and that little or no attention is paid to hardware and peripheral replacement costs, to operational costs of power, connectivity, maintenance and consumables and to the associated costs of training, curriculum and assessment reform, supervision, monitoring and evaluation etc. As a result, operational costs are widely seriously under-funded, which leads to under or even non-usage of the expensive hardware procurements.

The presentation finishes with a review of the RETA conclusions on ICT financing in Central Asia and beyond and an introduction to the spreadsheets that RETA is developing in an effort to support governments, ministries of education and development partners in identifying and making provision for ICT costs.



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**Tony Read** graduated from St Catherine's College, Oxford University in 1963 and was a secondary school teacher first in the UK and then, from 1963 until 1970 in Cape Coast, Ghana. He became Deputy Head of the Education Dept of Oxford University Press followed by Manager of the NZ Branch of OUP and finally the Manager of the International Division before leaving in 1979 to become the Director of the British Book Development Council, where he stayed for 10 years until he founded International Book Development Ltd with a group of close friends as an educational consultancy company specialising in textbook and school library development work. From 2004 he has worked, also with friends, as a member of another educational consultancy company - International Education Partners (IEP). Tony Read has worked on educational assignments in very many countries in all continents for most of the leading donor agencies and for many governments. In recent years he has concentrated, in addition to textbook and school libraries and publishing development strategies, on curriculum development, language of instruction policies, literacy and ICT development in basic education systems. He designed the highly successful textbook revolving funds and rental schemes in Armenia and Uzbekistan and the ICT in Basic Education Project, also in Uzbekistan. Since mid 2006 he has been the team leader for the ADB-funded Regional Technical Assistance Project in Central Asia.

