



Validation Report

Reference Number: PCV: SAM 2008-65
Project Number: 30175
Loan Number: 1752-SAM (SF)
May 2009

Samoa: Education Sector Project

Independent Evaluation Department

Asian Development Bank

ABBREVIATIONS

ADB	–	Asian Development Bank
EA	–	executing agency
ESP-II	–	Second Education Sector Project
IA	–	implementing agency
IST	–	in-service training
M&E	–	monitoring and evaluation
MESC	–	Ministry of Education, Sports, and Culture
MOF	–	Ministry of Finance
PCR	–	project completion report
PMS	–	project management specialist
PMT	–	project management team
PPMS	–	project performance monitoring system
PWD	–	Public Works Department

Key Words

Apia; Ministry of Education, Sports, and Culture; Ministry of Finance; primary and secondary schools project management specialist; project management team; satellite schools; school committee

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PROJECT COMPLETION VALIDATION REPORT FORM

A. Basic Project Data		PCR Validation Date	May 2009	
Project and Loan/Grant Number	1752-SAM (SF)		Approved	Actual
Project Name	Education Sector Project	Total Project Cost (\$ million)	10.06	10.93
Country	Independent State of Samoa	Loan/Grant (\$ million) (SDR equivalent)	7.00	7.41
Sector(s)	Education Sector	Total Cofinancing (\$ million)		
ADB Financing (\$ million)	ADF: 7.00	Borrower (\$ million)	1.65	2.84
	OCR:	Beneficiaries (\$ million)	1.41	0.68
Cofinanciers		Others (\$ million)		
Approval Date	5 Sep 2000	Effectiveness Date	1 Jan 2001	17 Oct 2000
Signing Date	2 Oct 2000	Closing Date	31 Oct 2004	13 April 2006
Project Officers	Michel Latendresse Rishi Ram Adhar	Location HQ RM	From	To
			17 Oct 2000 16 Nov 2001	15 Nov 2001 13 Apr 2001
Validator	Shiva Raj Lohani, Consultant	Director	R. B. Adhikari, IED1	
Quality Control Reviewer/Peer Reviewer	Suganya Hutaserani, Lead Professional (Development Evaluation)			

ADB = Asian Development Bank, ADF = Asian Development Fund, HQ = headquarters, OCR = ordinary capital resources, IED = Independent Evaluation Department, PCR = project completion report, RM = resident mission, SDR = special drawing rights.

B. Project Description (Summarized from Report and Recommendation of the President)

(i) Rationale: The Government of Samoa recognizes that it must improve the public education system by improving primary and secondary school facilities, providing inputs of appropriate quality, upgrading teachers' skills, and managing the public education system so as to develop a well-qualified workforce that (a) can take advantage of opportunities in the private sector resulting from the ongoing economic and public sector reforms, and (b) has the skills required for the growth of the private sector.

(ii) Impact: The Project was expected to increase the number of appropriately skilled people to meet the labor needs of the increasingly market-oriented and broad-based economy in Samoa.

(iii) Objectives or Expected Outcomes. Access to high-quality and relevant education was to be increased through the provision of efficiently managed and refurbished primary and secondary schools.

(iv) Components and Outputs:

(a) Increasing equity in access to education. Through a series of subprojects, the Project was to (1) rehabilitate and, where required, expand the facilities of several primary and junior secondary satellite schools in the greater Apia area that may be expected to attract students who now attend school in Malifa; (2) upgrade the building facilities of some district primary schools and junior secondary schools outside Apia to enable them, as a group, to offer the full secondary school curriculum to students in their catchment areas; (3) restructure the three primary schools in Malifa—Apia Lower, Apia Middle, and Leififi Intermediate, which together enroll about 3,300 students—into one primary school, and refurbish and integrate the building facilities to serve up to 750 students living in villages in the immediate vicinity of Malifa; and (4) refurbish the buildings of Leififi College in Malifa to allow the school to continue to offer the full senior secondary school curriculum, but to fewer students (750 versus the present 1,500).

(b) **Improving quality of education.** The Project was to (1) improve teaching resources (curriculum materials, teaching aids, library resources, and related educational inputs); (2) develop and implement an in-service training (IST) program for teachers; and (3) improve the planning and coordination of teacher training activities among the Education Department, the Public Service Commission, and the National University of Samoa.

(c) **Improving educational efficiency and institutional capacity.** The Project was to (1) promote the efficient use of resources; (2) improve the capacity of the Education Department to design, implement, and monitor education development programs; (3) develop optimal plans and specifications for buildings and fixtures for general and specific-purpose classrooms; and (4) support each school in instituting a school management development program and a facilities maintenance program through formal agreements between the Education Department and the school committee.

(d) **Providing project implementation support.** The Project was to (1) provide office equipment, supplies and services, and vehicles for program monitoring; and (2) implement a public awareness program to familiarize the community with the Project and promote ownership.

C. Evaluation of Design and Implementation (PCR Assessment and Validation)

(i) **Relevance of Design and Formulation:** The project completion report (PCR) considered the design and formulation of the Project *highly relevant* because (a) the Project was consistent with ADB's country strategy of providing support for ongoing economic and public sector reforms; (b) the design was simple, as the sector loan modality allowed the Implementing Agency (IA) to undertake a series of subprojects; (c) the design was appropriate and anchored in a consistent logic with plausible links between inputs, outputs, purpose, and goal; (d) the assumptions concerning school committee inputs, the institutional capacity of the Ministry of Education, Sports, and Culture (MESC), and the capacity of the awareness campaign were realistic and were endorsed by the Government; and (e) the decision to extend the IST to all schools allowed more efficient use of training resources, increased the number of benefiting teachers from 360 to more than 1,400, and thus enhanced the relevance of the design during implementation.

The Validator considers the Project *relevant*, rather than highly relevant, because of design weaknesses pointed out in the PCR itself: (a) the ambitious phasing of the Project—the fielding of project consultants coincided with numerous technical assistance (TA) projects supported by other aid agencies; and (b) the failure to take into account the inevitable time lag between improvements in education quality in the satellite schools and the consequent decision of parents to send their children to these schools.

(ii) **Project Outputs (or Conditions in the Case of Program Loans):** The PCR noted that the Project generated almost all of its planned outputs, but completion was delayed by more than 1 year. The PCR reported the following outputs for each of the project components:

Increasing Equity in Access to Education. The Project largely achieved its physical improvement outputs, as it refurbished 6 satellite primary schools, 1 new consolidated primary school in Apia, 2 secondary colleges in Apia, 10 secondary schools in rural areas (two of them in close proximity to Apia), 3 satellite secondary schools on the island of Upolu, and 5 satellite secondary schools on the island of Savaii. Each school was refurbished according to the standards and specifications laid down in the national building codes of Samoa. But the provision of a full secondary curriculum for grades 9–13 at all schools was not completely achieved, although more subjects were offered in 9 out of 12 project secondary schools.

The PCR noted further that the Project did not fully achieve its enrollment change targets. The rebalancing of equity in access did bring about changes, but not to the extent planned. For example, at project completion in 2007, only 1,499 more students were enrolled in satellite primary schools against a target of 2,500 by 2004. Likewise, the new single Malifa Primary School had an enrollment of 1,016 in 2007, compared with a covenanted maximum of 750, and enrollment in Leififi College (1,401 in 2005 and 1,368 in 2007), although below the baseline, remains well above the target of less than 750.

Improving Quality of Education. The Project met or exceeded its key output targets: (a) educational inputs (curriculum materials, teaching aids, library resources, and related educational inputs); (b) IST for primary school teachers (6,282 training days, or 6 days per teacher); and (c) IST in three cycles for all secondary school teachers (11,844 training days, or more than 7 days per teacher). Although delayed, the IST generally exceeded the appraisal targets, as the Asian Development Bank (ADB) agreed to extend the training to all teachers in Samoa. A teacher marketing committee was also established to address teacher supply issues. The IST strategy and program has been operating since 2002.

Improving Educational Efficiency and Institutional Capacity. The Project met or exceeded its output targets: (a) a comprehensive process of planning, scheduling, procurement, accounting, record keeping, and auditing in MESC's current development projects; (b) a facilities handbook with standard designs and specifications for all school facilities and equipment, which was developed in 2002, endorsed by the Government in 2005, and applied in all project schools to ensure a consistent and adequate quality of educational infrastructure, thus further reducing past inequities; (c) the participation of all project schools in the continuous school improvement baseline check of standards, the implementation of agreed maintenance schedules by the school committees, and school committee ownership of the project outcomes; and (d) a comprehensive project performance monitoring system (PPMS), which became part of Manumea, the national education management information system.

Providing Project Implementation Support. The Project provided office equipment, supplies and services, vehicles, monitoring, and a public awareness campaign to familiarize the community with the Project and promote ownership. It supported the establishment and operation of a project management team (PMT) to complement MESC's management and staff in project implementation. The PMT, however, did not have enough staff to meet its workload. In particular, the phasing of the TA associated with the Project placed extreme pressure on the PMT and devalued some of its outputs. On the other hand, the training provided to the PMT under the Project, expanded the project management capacity of MESC, to the benefit of later projects, including ADB's Second Education Sector Project (ESP-II). The public awareness campaign helped build public support for education generally, and in particular for the enrollment changes in schools in Apia.

The Validator considers the outputs achieved by the Project to have been accurately reflected in the PCR, although some should instead be classified as outcomes (e.g., increased enrollment with better balancing of equity in access).

(iii) Project Cost, Disbursements, Borrower Contribution, and Conformance to Schedule (as Relevant to Project Performance): The actual cost of the Project (\$10.93 million) was about 8.6% higher than the appraisal estimate (\$10.06 million). ADB's loan increased by 5.9% (from \$7 million to \$7.41 million), and the Government's contribution increased by 72% (from \$1.65 million to \$2.84 million). The PCR gave the following reasons for the cost overrun: (a) the cost of financing the additional consulting services; (b) the higher-than-expected cost of educational support materials and IST; and (c) the higher-than-expected operation and maintenance costs, including the higher cost of counterpart staff in the PMT.

The Project was to be implemented in 4 years but took 5 years to complete, mainly because of delays associated with school rehabilitation, which delayed disbursements. As noted in the PCR, other factors that delayed disbursements were (a) difficulties in operating the imprest account due to the lack of familiarity of the Treasury Department and the Ministry of Finance (MOF) with the use of the account; and (b) procurement difficulties related to consultant recruitment, the change in the mode of procurement of educational equipment and materials from international competitive bidding to direct purchase, and the modification of procurement processes to accommodate government procedures.

The PCR also noted that local communities were unable to finance up to 25% of the cost of refurbishing schools, despite their commitment to do so in the Loan Agreement, because of the higher-than-expected cost of refurbishing and limited capacity. The communities financed 10% of the cost of refurbishing, but their contribution to the total project cost was reduced by about 52% (from \$1.41 million to \$0.68 million).

The Validator concurs with these PCR findings.

(iv) Implementation Arrangements, Conditions and Covenants, Related Technical Assistance, and Procurement and Consultant Performance

Implementation Arrangements. The PCR mentioned several changes in the project implementation arrangements envisaged at appraisal: (a) minor changes in agency names—the Treasury Department (the Executing Agency [EA]) became the MOF, and the Education Department (the IA) became the MESC; (b) a modification in the terms of reference of the education steering committee requiring the latter to provide general policy guidance and advice to the PMT, which was created within MESC to carry out the day-to-day implementation of the Project under the supervision of the project management specialist (PMS); (c) the inclusion of an office assistant and an assistant project development and procurement coordinator in the PMT (in addition to the project manager, the project administrative officer, and the project development and procurement coordinator); (d) an increase in consultant support for the PMT; and (e) the hiring of private sector consulting architects to provide design and supervision services, instead of the Public Works Department (PWD) as envisaged at appraisal. These changes in institutional arrangements within MESC increased the project cost and affected the implementation schedule.

The Validator concurs with the PCR findings that these changes in institutional arrangements resulted in a cost overrun and inefficiency in project implementation.

Conditions and Covenants. The PCR reported that compliance with loan conditions and covenants was generally satisfactory, as (a) most covenants were generally complied with; (b) the covenant relating to the recruitment of the PMS was complied with after a delay of 5 months; (c) three covenants were partly complied with—the PMT was established, but after a delay of 5 months, and it operated without a project manager for 12 months after the original one withdrew from the Project; design and supervision services were outsourced after the PWD was restructured and closed; and the number of teachers in the project schools was maintained; and (d) the covenant related to enrollment caps for the new Malifa Primary School and for the refurbished Leififi College was not fully complied with—Malifa Primary School had a total enrollment of 1,024 at the start of the 2004 school year and Leififi College had 1,407 at the start of the 2005 school year (versus an upper limit of 750 for both), because of strong demand from parents who believed that these schools offered the best education available.

The Validator notes that the covenant requiring the communities to finance 25% of the cost of civil works (Schedule 6, para. 9, in Appendix 8, page 55) was also not complied with. The Validator agrees with the PCR that mandating a maximum attendance level as a covenant may not be the most constructive way to restrict enrollment in popular schools and increase enrollment in other schools. Strong demand for popular schools has left the added student places and facilities at project schools unfilled.

Related Technical Assistance. The associated advisory TA was rated *successful* in the technical assistance completion report because it (a) helped establish the PMT and the PPMS, (b) assisted MESC in developing its project management and monitoring capacity, (c) provided educational planning guidelines, (d) helped establish an effective system of IST and improved the libraries in all project schools, and (e) provided training in maintenance programs to school principals and school committees.

Although the TA was successful, improvements could have been made, particularly in phasing. The PCR noted that the absorptive capacity of MESC was overestimated such that two large teams of consultants were fielded at the same time, placing excessive demands on the limited staff resources of MESC and PMT. Often, the consultants (and to a lesser extent, the PMT), rather than merely guiding the MESC staff in performing their tasks, had to do the work themselves. Results were achieved, but there was limited capacity development in MESC. TA implementation before, rather than during, the Project should have been considered.

The Validator concurs with these PCR findings and notes that the subject is adequately covered in the PCR.

Procurement and Consultant Performance. The PCR reported that 54 contracts in all were procured under the Project: 15 through international competitive bidding, 20 through local competitive bidding, and 19 through direct purchase. The procurement arrangements underwent two changes during

implementation. In view of the larger-than-expected cost of the civil works package for one contract and the impracticality of international competitive bidding for works of this type, ADB, at the Government's request, raised the limit for local competitive bidding (the form of procurement agreed on) from \$500,000 to \$1 million. Also, the unsuccessful tendering under international competitive bidding for the procurement of educational equipment and materials in 2002 showed the inappropriateness of this form of procurement. In 2003, ADB and the Government therefore agreed to change the mode of procurement for some contracts from international competitive bidding to direct purchase.

There were some difficulties with consultant recruitment, primarily due to unfamiliarity with ADB procedures. The PMS was appointed in September 2000 but mobilized only in January 2001. The Project thus lost the opportunity for a rapid start-up. Another problem arose when the PMT sought approval for a variation in two contracts because the Office of the Auditor General believed that the contracting procedures did not fully comply with the Government's guidelines. After the PWD was restructured, the PMT needed to contract out the design and supervision services to the private sector, further delaying implementation by 8 months. ADB agreed to use loan funds to hire the secondary-school course writers directly. In the case of the IST for primary school teachers, the expansion in coverage (from 7 project schools to 141 government primary schools) made it necessary to hire national consultants to prepare course materials and to train the trainers. ADB hired the writers, using TA funds, while the Government met the cost of the training.

The PCR considered the performance of the TA consultants *satisfactory*. All consultants met their terms of reference and effectively supported implementation and the development of the capacity of counterparts to design, administer, and implement projects. The performance of all loan-funded consultants was also deemed satisfactory by ADB review missions. The increased capacity of MESCS's PMT and PPMS has been a direct result of the contribution of the TA and loan consultants.

The Validator considers procurement and consultant performance to have been adequately dealt with in the PCR.

(v) Performance of the Borrower and Executing Agency: The PCR rated the performance of the Borrower and EA (MOF) *generally satisfactory*, because (a) the factors that delayed the appointment of PMT staff and the recruitment of the PMS were beyond the control of the Borrower; (b) the problem with the imprest account experienced at the start by the Borrower and the EA was resolved immediately; and (c) the Borrower's auditing procedures were able to expose a weakness in the financial reporting requirements of the Project. Similarly, the PCR rated the performance of the IA (MESCS) *satisfactory* because the MESCS was able to overcome implementation-related challenges by developing its capacity to manage donor-funded projects, establishing an asset management division to help the communities plan and manage school maintenance, and having its core executives and senior staff manage the overlapping projects.

The Validator considers the performance of the Borrower, the EA, and the IA only *partly satisfactory* for the following reasons: (a) delay in the school civil works caused by the Government's restructuring of PWD; (b) long delay in the appointment of the PMS; (c) excessive delay in the appointment of a PMT project manager after the resignation of the first incumbent; (d) frequent changes of personnel in the PMT and repeated delays in the filling of vacant positions; and (e) outright disregard of the covenanted enrollment ceilings at Malifa High School and Leififi College, which were neither enforced nor renegotiated with ADB, giving parents even less incentive to enroll their children in the project schools.

(vi) Performance of the Asian Development Bank: The PCR rated the project supervision by ADB *satisfactory* because (a) the inception mission successfully trained PMT staff in project management, procurement, and disbursement procedures; (b) the project manager had an opportunity to attend an ADB project administration and implementation seminar in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea; (c) ADB fielded two review missions yearly on average to identify issues and recommend remedial measures; and (d) ADB staff provided responsive support to PMT to help minimize delays in project implementation.

The Validator concurs with the *satisfactory* rating of ADB's performance in the PCR.

D. Evaluation of Performance (PCR Assessment and Validation)

(i) Relevance: *Relevant*

The PCR rated the Project *highly relevant* since it was highly consistent with ADB's country strategy and the Government's development priority of improving the education system and making it responsive to market demand. The Project also had some good design features, as assessed in section C (i).

The Validator rates the Project *relevant*, rather than *highly relevant*, because of its design weaknesses, as assessed in section C (i).

(ii) Effectiveness in Achieving Outcomes: *Less Effective*

The PCR rated the Project *effective* on the basis of its performance so far against the revised project framework, as follows: (a) average scores in the national year 8 and year 12 examinations and the Pacific Senior Secondary Certificate examination have increased since 2001; (b) there has also been an increase in transition rates and in the number of schools providing the full secondary curriculum; and (c) five of the 14 results set out in the revised project framework have been fully achieved and nine have been partly achieved. The PCR noted, however, that it was too early for a definitive assessment of the Project's prospects of meeting its goal because the changes expected, by their very nature, require a full period of schooling (13 years) to become fully evident at the tertiary, or school-leaver, stage. Moreover, if the assessment were based on the performance indicators in the original project framework, the performance so far would not be impressive.

The Validator rates the project *less effective*, rather than *effective*, for the following reasons:

First, if the assessment had used the performance indicators in the original project framework (with 1998 as a benchmark), a falling off would have been noted in some outcome indicators (e.g., the average overall score at the national year 8 examination dropped from 52% in 1998 to 39% in 2005, and the average score in mathematics declined rather than improved over the same period).

Second, even when the revised project framework (with 2001 as a benchmark) is used, the indicators do not seem to have improved much: (a) overall enrollment increased from 51,389 in 2001 to 54,889 in 2006 (only a 7% increase in 5 years); (b) the average score for the year 8 examination, despite having increased, is a low 40%; (c) the average score for English in the year 8 examination decreased from 45% to 43%; (d) the average score for the year 12 examination declined in 2001–2006 from 38% to 35%; and (e) the average score in the Pacific Secondary School Certificate examination increased from 46% in 2001 to only 47% in 2005.

Third, it is clear from the project design and description that the direct intent of the Project was encapsulated in the first project component, which, as stated in para. 8 of the PCR, "specifically sought to relieve overcrowding of popular primary and secondary schools at Malifa in Apia by drawing students back to the satellite schools in nearby areas that were to be upgraded under the Project." This component accounted for 73% of the Project's base cost—or possibly as much as 80% if the related project management and consultancy costs were taken into account. In the Validator's view, the most meaningful measure of effectiveness would thus be the extent to which the stated outcome for this component has been achieved. The PCR itself pointed out that the targets of this component were not fully achieved (paras. 10 and 11) since (a) at completion in 2007, only 1,499 more students had enrolled in satellite primary schools, against a target of 2,500 by 2004; (b) the new single Malifa Primary School had an enrollment of 1,016 in 2007, compared with a covenanted maximum of 750; (c) enrollment in Leififi College at completion (1,401 in 2005 and 1,368 in 2007), although below the baseline, remained well above the target of less than 750; (d) enrollment in the three satellite secondary schools on Upolu increased from 634 in 2001 to 891 in 2005, but this increase was only 37% of the target; (e) by 2007, enrollment at these schools had increased to 995, still below the target.

(iii) Efficiency in Achieving Outcomes and Outputs: *Less Efficient*

The PCR rated the Project *efficient* because, according to the report: (a) the likely socioeconomic impact is high; (b) least-cost measures were largely applied; (c) the process (of converting inputs to outputs) was mostly efficient; and (d) the net benefit flow is not very likely to erode over time.

The Validator rates the Project *less efficient*, rather than *efficient*, mainly because of the cost overrun (about 8.6% over the estimated total project cost) associated with inefficient implementation, as follows: (a) more consultants were hired to undertake activities that were originally allocated to the PMT; (b) the Government's institutional restructuring caused long implementation delays and increased the implementation cost; and (c) the expected 25% contribution of local communities to school upgrading did not materialize and this portion of the cost had to be paid by the Government.

(iv) Preliminary Assessment of Sustainability: *Likely*

The PCR noted that the major risk to sustainability lies in the financing of ongoing maintenance and the periodic replacement of school equipment and teaching materials. Because many rural and low-income communities do not have enough funds for preventive maintenance, the Government, through the recently established asset management division of MESAC, is helping communities plan and manage school maintenance activities, and is considering including school maintenance cost as a budget line item as a matter of policy. For this reason, as well as the strong demand for education in Samoa and the clear and continuing political will to provide good education, the PCR rated project sustainability *likely*.

The Validator concurs with this rating.

(v) Impact (both Intended and Unintended): *Modest*

The PCR rated the project impact *substantial* because (a) the improvements in the school facilities helped increase the number of beneficiary students (to about 12,500 students, from the 10,000–12,000 expected at appraisal); (b) some improvements in educational outcomes were observed; (c) the institutional capacity of MESAC improved, as indicated by the number of those who were trained among primary and secondary teachers (1,400 against the target of 600) and MESAC staff (285 training days for 65 district and 24 administrative and management staff); (d) the public awareness program helped influence public opinion in support of education and the changes proposed under the Project; (e) communication and networking within MESAC, government agencies, and donors working in the sector improved; (f) the use of private sector architects to design and supervise the works was a clear manifestation of public-private sector partnership in education; (g) no negative impact on the indigenous population of Samoa was observed; and (h) no resettlement was required, because schools were built on vacant land allocated by the local communities.

The Validator notes that most of the indicators mentioned as impact in the PCR were, in fact, outputs. The PCR did not clearly show gender or socioeconomic impact. The impact of the project framework, if assessed against the project purpose—an “increase in access to high quality and relevant education in efficiently managed primary and secondary schools”—is of doubtful significance, as physical access may have increased, but has yet to be taken up. Parents still prefer to send their children to the better-known schools in central Apia. On balance, the project impact, in the Validator's view, was *modest*, rather than *substantial*.

E. Overall Assessment, Lessons, and Recommendations (Validation of PCR Assessment)**(i) Overall Assessment: *Partly Successful***

The PCR rated the Project *successful* overall because it (a) was generally well-prepared, received strong support from the Government and close and supportive supervision from ADB, and was largely implemented as conceived; (b) represented a timely intervention in a sector that is a high priority for the Government, because of clear macroeconomic need and sociocultural significance; (c) refurbished schools, particularly outside Malifa, and put in place a much more systematic and sustainable approach to education

development than previously existed; and (d) substantially addressed long-standing inequities in the education system.

The Validator's overall project rating is *partly successful*, given the combined ratings for the four major evaluation criteria—relevant, less effective, less efficient, and likely to be sustainable. As assessed in detail in sections D (i)–(iv), while the Project was relevant and appears likely to be sustainable, the expected outcome indicators did not improve much (and worsened in some cases). The Project also suffered from a cost overrun associated with inefficient implementation.

(ii) Lessons

The PCR identified the following lessons: (a) the feasibility of large community contributions to a project should be analyzed at greater length; (b) the timing and phasing of TA inputs in relation to a loan project are critical in situations with low capacity—at times the TA should precede the start of the loan project; (c) it is unrealistic to set ambitious targets for enrollment caps in schools that offer the best education without allowing enough time for other schools to provide education of similar quality; (d) the establishment and effective use of new specialist facilities and equipment in schools requires significant school-based training and support; (e) extended delays during implementation may suggest weaknesses in project design and require determined action; and (f) well-designed community-based social marketing is useful in influencing public opinion in support of education and bringing about behavioral changes across communities.

The Validator concurs with the foregoing lessons.

(iii) Recommendations

The PCR recommended the following: (a) ESP-II should continue the monitoring work started under the Project; (b) ADB and the Borrower should agree on a revised timetable and decide whether to amend the absolute enrollment targets; (c) the Borrower should resolve the continuing difficulties facing communities in maintaining the project school facilities and equipment, and consider how it can help provide a more sustainable basis for ongoing improvements in education in Samoa; (d) the Borrower should assist MESC in greatly improving its asset management and ensure that it puts in place further measures to maintain the project schools and other schools and their equipment; and (e) the Borrower should accelerate its current investigations into teacher supply and demand and take the necessary steps, including improving the remuneration and status of teachers, to ensure adherence to the agreed staffing formulas and ongoing improvement in the quality of teachers.

The Validator concurs with these recommendations, which focus on follow-up actions that can be undertaken in the ongoing ESP-II.

F. M&E Design, Implementation, and Utilization (PCR Assessment and Validation)

(i) M&E Design

The monitoring and evaluation (M&E) design consisted of (a) a project framework with performance indicators and a monitoring mechanism (Appendix 1); and (b) a loan covenant (Schedule 6, para. 13) relating to project performance monitoring, which required the Borrower to make certain that the PMT established a PPMS. The PCR presented a revised project framework showing the status of the indicators at the time of completion (Appendix 2).

(ii) Implementation

The PCR pointed out that the loan covenant relating to the PPMS was complied with. A comprehensive PPMS as specified in the RRP was established and continued operating within the MESC's information systems, which provided necessary information relating to human resource administration (Pelican), the education management information system, the special needs assessment program, project output monitoring (project tracker), the baseline checklist of standards (surveyor), and examination results.

(iii) Utilization

The PCR noted that the PPMS system continued operating and was used to generate annual monitoring reports on progress against performance indicators, maintenance of school facilities and equipment, and enrollment.

The Validator concurs with the satisfactory rating in the PCR for the design, implementation, and use of the M&E system of the Project.

G. Others (e.g., Safeguards, including Governance and Anticorruption; Fiduciary Aspects; Government Assessment of the Project, as Applicable) (PCR Assessment and Validation)

The PCR did not explicitly report problems with respect to safeguards, governance, and anticorruption issues.

The Validator found no safeguard violations or major unintended consequences.

H. Ratings	PCR	IED Review	Reasons for Disagreements/Comments
Relevance	Highly Relevant	Relevant	To be rated <i>highly relevant</i> , a project should have no major design weaknesses. See section C (i).
Effectiveness in Achieving Outcomes	Effective	Less Effective	Expected outputs (increased enrollment outside Apia and reduced enrollment in Apia) were not fully achieved. Evidence of improvement in student learning achievement was limited.
Efficiency in Achieving Outcomes and Outputs	Efficient	Less Efficient	The Project suffered from both delays and a cost overrun. Key staff positions remained vacant for long periods, resulting in delayed implementation.
Preliminary Assessment of Sustainability	Likely	Likely	Same rating as in the PCR.
Borrower and EA	Satisfactory	Partly Satisfactory	Key staff positions remained unfilled, consultants were required to do the work of the PMT, and important covenants were only partly complied with.
Performance of ADB Impact	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Same rating as in the PCR.
Overall Assessment	Successful	Partly Successful	Assessment based on combined ratings for the first four evaluation criteria above, with a weighted average of 20%, 30%, 30%, and 20%, respectively.
Quality of PCR		Partly Satisfactory	See below.

I. Comments on PCR Quality

The PCR is only *partly satisfactory*.

While the PCR followed the PCR Guidelines, it seemed inconsistent in presenting and analyzing data. For example, while it indicated that the Project was effective in achieving its outcome targets, it made amply clear that the main expected outcome of reducing pressure on schools in Apia and building a sound and

sustainable, high-quality school system in satellite towns or in other outlying areas was not fully achieved. In trying to make its case while at the same time trying to report factually, it tended to contradict itself. There was also confusion between outputs, outcomes, and impact.

J. Recommendations for IED Follow-Up

IED proposes to prepare a project performance evaluation report for the Project in 2010 or 2011 to allow time for the Project to achieve its intended outcomes and impact.

K. Data Sources for Validation

This desk study validation exercise used data from the following sources: the Project's report and recommendation of the President and PCR, Board discussion minutes on the Project's approval, back-to-office reports on loan review missions, and the associated TA report and completion report.

REGIONAL DEPARTMENT'S RESPONSE TO THE PROJECT COMPLETION REPORT VALIDATION REPORT

On 9 October 2008, the Independent Evaluation Department (IED) circulated the draft Project Completion Validation Report for interdepartmental comments. IED received comments from the Pacific Department on 30 October 2008. The Pacific Liaison and Coordination Office supports the assessment provided in the report.