TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE COMPLETION REPORT

Division: ECSS

TA No. and Name **TA 2879-KGZ: Strengthening of Education Planning and Administration**		**Amount Approved:** $930,000 **Revised Amount:** $930,000	
Executing Agency: Ministry of Education	**Source of Funding:** JSF	**TA Amount Undisbursed** $189,421	**TA Amount Utilized** $740,579

Date			Completion Date	
Approval	**Signing**	**Fielding of Consultants**	**Original**	**Actual**
29 Sept 1997	5 Jan 1998	9 Sept 1998	31 Dec 1999	31 December 2004
			Closing Date	
			Original	**Actual**
			31 May 2000	31 December 2004

Description

Since independence in 1991, reduced budget resources and weakened state mechanisms for social sectors support, including for the education sector, contributed to a deterioration of the quality of social services, rising unemployment, and a substantial drop in the standard of living in the Kyrgyz Republic. The allocation of funds for recurrent expenditure in the education sector was insufficient, coupled with inadequate investment in the sector. The Government gives high priority to the development of the education sector and requested the Asian Development Bank to play a lead role in providing support to the sector. The technical assistance (TA) was approved together with the Education Sector Development Project[1] (ESDP), which comprised program and project loans. The TA was designed to complement ESDP in strengthening the Ministry of Education's[2] capacity to carry out the Government's policy reforms.

Objectives and Scope

The objective of the TA was to support the Government's initiative to reform the education sector to be responsive to changing democratic, social, and economic conditions by improving its efficiency and effectiveness. To achieve this objective, the TA aimed at improving education administration and management at all levels and at promoting coherent development of the education sector. The TA consisted of two components, (i) education policy and planning, and (ii) management and administration. The TA scope included (i) defining effective functions for education between national and local governments, (ii) strengthening policy and planning capacity at the central level, (iii) developing a cadre of strategic planning trainers in the country, (iv) improving management capacity for central and local administration, and (ii) training cadres in school management.

Evaluation of Inputs

Initial TA inputs comprised (i) 27 person-months of international consultants; (ii) 33 person-months of domestic consultants; (iii) studies, research, in-country seminars, and workshops; and (iv) in-country training for 668 participants, including 620 administrators at central, local and school levels and for 48 trainers in planning and management. Implementation of the TA was divided into four major components: education policy and planning, education management, financial management and school management.

MOE's performance was considered satisfactory. MOE provided appropriate counterpart staff, although in a few instances, delays were encountered before the counterparts were designated. In the beginning, TA implementation encountered delays due to frequent changes in MOE leadership, which influenced the consultants' performance. Towards the end of TA implementation, MOE ensured stable assignment of counterpart staff. ADB conducted regular review missions to monitor TA implementation, carefully reviewed reports submitted by consultants, and discussed relevant issues with the Government. ADB's performance is considered satisfactory.

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[1] ADB. 1997. *Report and Recommendation of the President to the Board of Directors on Proposed Loans and a Technical Assistance to the Kyrgyz Republic for the Education Sector Development Project.* Manila.

[2] At appraisal the executing agency was called the Ministry of Education, Science, and Culture. In 2000 it was reorganized and renamed to the Ministry of Education and Culture, and in April 2004 it was further reorganized and renamed the Ministry of Education.

The TA implementation period, originally estimated at 24 months, was extended several times. The TA was extended to accommodate the Government's request for increased knowledge transfer to the loan project participants, particularly to MOE staff and to utilize TA savings to continue capacity building activities with MOE and local education administrations. The performance of the international consultant firm was partly satisfactory. The consulting firm was late in submitting reports and other outputs, including the final report. In several cases, the consultants did not provide innovative or practical solutions. Individual consultants contracted to prepare several additional reports completed their work as scheduled and to a high professional standard.

Evaluation of Outputs

The TA consultants delivered TA reports and outputs with significant delays. Additional inputs from the consulting firm were required to finalize the education finance subcomponent. The TA consultants delivered the following outputs: (i) training seminars to strengthen policy planning and coordination between the central and local governments, (ii) training and seminars on education and school management and publication of manuals, (iii) establishment of the EMIS, (iv) a draft textbook policy, and (v) a draft teacher training policy.

Individual consultants hired to support the restructured loan project contributed to: (i) updating the EMIS, (ii) reviewing textbook development, (iii) reviewing teacher training, and (iv) strengthening monitoring and evaluation. The draft textbook development policy and teacher training development policy papers prepared by the consultants served as the basis for Government policy recommendations. TA reports were distributed to policymakers, schools, and donors.

Overall Assessment and Rating

The TA is rated as partly successful. This was largely due to poor performance by the consulting firm, and major delays in the delivery of reports and other outputs.

Major Lessons Learned

Frequent changes of leadership in MOE contributed to delays in implementation of planned activities under the TA. Future TAs should specify details of the counterpart input requirements at all levels to minimize delays in counterpart staff provision and communication. Close monitoring of TA activities is a key to ensure that established project outputs are sustained and updated in a timely manner and to ascertain the achievement and impact of reforms.

Recommendations and Follow-Up Actions

The TA supported policy reforms intended to restructure the education sector, proposed policy recommendations in support of ESDP, and strengthened the capacity of MOE. The TA outcomes provide a solid basis for further policy dialogue in the education sector, to ensure continuing support to the Government in implementation of education reforms. In particular, further support should be given to strengthen capacity at different Government levels, including the *raion* and *oblast* levels, to effectively and efficiently implement education sector reforms.

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