

## TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE COMPLETION REPORT

Division : SESS

<b>TA No., Country and Name</b>			<b>Amount Approved</b> \$600,000	
TA 4603-VIE: Strategic Secondary Education Planning and Cooperation			<b>Revised Amount:</b> \$600,000	
<b>Executing Agency:</b> Ministry of Education and Training (MOET)	<b>Source of Funding:</b> JSF - \$300,000; Government of Denmark - \$300,000	<b>Amount Undisbursed:</b> \$ 65,786.52	<b>Amount Utilized:</b> \$ 534,213.48	
<b>TA Approval Date:</b> 28 June 2005	<b>TA Signing Date:</b> 10 Nov 2005	<b>Fielding of First Consultants:</b> 10 Dec 2005	<b>TA Completion Date</b> <b>Original:</b> 31 Mar 2006 <b>Actual:</b> 31 Aug 2006 <b>Account Closing Date</b> <b>Original:</b> 31 Mar 2006 <b>Actual:</b> 29 Aug 2007	
<b>Description</b>				
<p>The Government of Viet Nam (the Government) has distinctly prioritized education, particularly secondary education, as one of the principal supporting mechanisms for the country's high economic growth and inclusive development. As stated in the five year Socio-Economic Development Plan 2006-2010 (SEDP), the key political commitment in the sector is universal secondary education: universal lower secondary education (LSE) by 2010 and upper secondary education (USE) and professional secondary education (PSE) by 2015. To achieve it, the Secondary Education Sector Master Plan 2001-2010 (the old SESMP) was jointly developed by the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) and ADB under a technical assistance (TA) 3560-VIE<sup>1</sup> in 2000. The old SESMP focused on improvement of access to LSE. As a result, secondary schooling has expanded dramatically: gross enrolment rate of LSE reached 90.4% in 2005 and of USE 55.3%.</p> <p>Equitable, effective and sustainable delivery of quality secondary schooling, however, has remained as a critical challenge. Poor quality of teaching, disparity in access by gender, regions and ethnicity, ineffective educational planning and management, unmet needs in upper and professional secondary education, and lack of results-based monitoring indicators for sector performance have moved to the forefront and dominated the educational reform agenda. These issues were not fully addressed by the old SESMP. In addition, in accordance with near universalization of primary education, some donors who had supported primary education including UNESCO, UNICEF and JICA, have shifted their attention to secondary education. To promote donor harmonization and avoid over-lapping of donor assistance, a new policy framework for secondary education was needed. In 2004, the Government requested ADB support for an advisory TA to develop a new SESMP for 2006-2010 based on the achievements of the old SESMP. The new SESMP was also expected to function as a framework for donor harmonization in the subsector.</p>				
<b>Expected Impact, Outcome and Outputs</b>				
<p>The expected impact of the TA was to assist the Government's commitment in universalizing secondary education with quality, equity, efficiency and sustainability. The expected outcome was a new strategic subsector master plan and the investment program within an effective aid coordination framework. The TA's expected outputs were six-fold; (i) the new SESMP 2006-2010; (ii) a comprehensive aid coordination matrix with a priority investment program for secondary education; (iii) public expenditure review for secondary education subsector; (iv) training needs assessment for strengthening capacity for strategic secondary education planning and management of MOET and the local governments; (v) new action plan for targeted assistance to the most disadvantaged groups; and (vi) a national school-mapping study and projection of demands for class-rooms to absorb all LSE-age cohorts by 2010.</p>				
<b>Delivery of Inputs and Conduct of Activities</b>				
<p>The TA was financed by a grant of \$300,000 from the Japan Special Fund and a grant of \$300,000 from the Government of Denmark. The TA was to provide 14 person-months (pms) for 5 international consultants and 40 PMs for 7 national consultants in the areas of (i) education policy analysis and results-based management; (ii) public expenditure review and financial analysis; (iii) education facilities and school mapping; (iv) aid agency coordinator; and (v) inclusive social development/gender development. On completion, actual international consultants had provided 15 PMs of services because 1 PM was added for the international team leader/result-based management specialist to organize some additional workshops to help the local governments develop provincial education plans based on the new SESMP. The terms of reference (TOR) for the consulting services clearly defined the expected quality and approaches of the inputs. The consultants provided their services in a professional manner in accordance with the TOR. The consultant carefully reviewed the sector performance and developed new policy targets and result-based monitoring indicators. Demand for education facilities has been projected for each province in consideration of various socio-economic factors including demographical trend, internal migration and urbanization, and the condition of the existing school buildings. Updated and segregated educational data and statistics at district level, collected through the consultants' extensive field visits to all the 64 provinces of the country, enabled in-depth sector review and policy recommendations. The Government and ADB were highly satisfied with the performance and inputs of the consultants.</p>				

<sup>1</sup> ADB. 2000. *Technical Assistance to the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam for Secondary Education Sector Master Plan*. The TCR was prepared on 24 September 2004.

ADB provided extensive support to the TA, including three review missions and timely provision of guidance and clarification in resolving technical and project implementation issues. Close communication and consultation was maintained between the consultant team in the field and the project officer for the entire TA period. MOET has provided the counterpart support as agreed. The performance of ADB and the executing agency is considered as satisfactory.

### **Evaluation of Outputs and Achievement of Outcome**

The TA outputs comprised (i) the new SESMP 2006-2010; (ii) donor coordination matrix and a priority investment program for donor partners; (iii) public expenditure review for secondary education; (iv) training needs assessment for educational planning and management; (v) Action Plan for Targeted Assistance to the Most Vulnerable Groups; (vi) national school mapping study and the projection of the demand for education facilities; and (vii) other reporting requirements (inception report, the mid-term report, the draft TA final report and the TA final report), 6 national workshops.

The Government and ADB agree that the consultants delivered all the Project outputs cost-effectively and that the quality of outputs was high. The new SESMP adopts the same format for the result-based monitoring framework as the Government's SEDP 2006-2010, which was particularly appreciated by the Prime Minister's Office. The action plan for targeted assistance to the most vulnerable groups identifies not only ethnic minorities and girls but also disabled children and out-of-school youth as potential beneficiaries. The comparative study on the various ongoing political initiatives in the education sector gives better understanding of the priority policies to local governments and donor partners. The outputs were delivered in a timely manner and disseminated through nation-wide workshops during TA implementation, so that the comments and feedbacks from the local governments were able to be incorporated in the final draft of the SESMP. MOET plans to submit the new SESMP to the national assembly to formalize the plan as a decree. In this regard, the TA has achieved the expected outcome.

### **Overall Assessment and Rating**

The TA is rated as highly successful. The TA fully achieved its purpose and produced expected outcomes. The goals and objectives of the TA were closely linked to the Government's overarching development goal of the SEDP 2006-2010. Close consultations with donor partners and provincial governments were undertaken, and resulted in a high level of ownership and mutual understanding of the TA among major stakeholders. Substantial donor cooperation occurred during TA implementation. Partner donors participated in all milestone activities of the TA and provided technical comments and advice on the master plan and other output documents. The donor coordination matrix produced under SESMP has been utilized for the country programming of UNESCO and UNICEF since 2006. The outputs of the TA are of high quality, and methodologies and approaches used for the project activities were innovative and met international standards. The implementation experienced a start-up delay, but after the inception mission, the activities were carried out effectively by the Project Management Unit and the consultant team. The Ministry of Planning and Investment assessed the new SESMP as one of the best sector master plans prepared recently.

### **Major Lessons**

The TA focused on producing a comprehensive and strategic subsector master plan. As a result of significant investment in sector analysis and a social survey on the ethnic minority provinces, the TA could develop the SESMP based on far more accurate and updated data than the official statistics obtained from MOET. These valuable, segregated statistics and information have been utilized for various planning activities by MOET, donor partners, and ADB. The TA revealed the importance of continued ADB involvement in solid sector work. This will require providing adequate financial resources for ADTAs. A clear and comprehensive sector plan helps the Government in making realistic and result-oriented policies and plans, and helps focus ADB-funded interventions.

### **Recommendations and Follow-Up Actions**

The TA highlighted a number of obstacles to universal secondary education. The two key challenges identified by the new SESMP include (i) more focused and effective targeted assistance to the ethnic minority groups, whose enrollment rate of LSE is still low; and (ii) quality improvement of PSE, the area which has been neglected for a long time. To address these issues, ADB has developed several new interventions as follow-up actions: (i) a proposed loan project for Secondary Education for the Most Disadvantaged Regions<sup>2</sup>; (ii) a Japan Fund for Poverty Reduction Program-9099: Expansion of Learning Opportunities for Ethnic Minority Youth;<sup>3</sup> and (iii) Loan 2298: Upper Secondary and Professional Teacher Development.<sup>4</sup> These projects are in line with the recommendations under the new SESMP. The long-term recommendations, including decentralization of educational planning, establishment of a quality assurance framework, strategic resource mobilization, and capacity development in MOET will be taken up through further policy dialogue under a proposed sector development program: the Secondary Education Sector Development Program planned for 2009.

Prepared by: Eiko K. Izawa

Designation: Education Specialist, SESS

<sup>2</sup> ADB. 2006. *Technical Assistance to the Preparing Socialist Republic of Viet Nam for Preparing Secondary Education for the Most Disadvantaged Regions Project*. Manila.

<sup>3</sup> ADB. 2006. *Grant Assistance to Socialist Republic of Viet Nam for the Expansion of Learning Opportunities for Ethnic Minority Youth*. Manila.

<sup>4</sup> ADB. 2006. *Report and Recommendation of the President to the Board of Director on a Proposed Loan to the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam for the Upper Secondary and Professional Teacher Development Project*. Manila.