

Case Study #5: School Performance Monitoring

I. Background:

Cambodia was under the control of a genocidal regime, i.e. Democratic Kampuchea, from 1975 to 1979. People from all walks of life (children, the elderly, Buddhist monks, civil servants either with good health or bad health in towns) were evacuated and forced to live in rural remote or mountainous areas, where they were treated as slaves or prisoners of war. The cadre of this genocidal regime either executed or tortured in a brutal manner in forms of shooting to death, hitting with hoes, knives, axes, stems of a sugar-palm leaf, long sticks, starvation or hanging on the allegations of being spies. Physical infrastructure was devastated.

Since the Liberation Day of 7 January 1979, rehabilitation and development of cross-cutting sector infrastructure has started from nothing. Development of human resources and other physical resources has been underway. In particular, education sector has been prioritized by the Government. School operations started slowly in the 'still-lacking' forms in terms of the number of teachers, availability of desks, insufficient number of classrooms, lack of books, etc.

The first-ever approach for the Ministry of Education was about the fact that "The literate teach the illiterate and the ones who know more teach the ones who know less". It was under the trees where we sat down and learnt our lessons and we ate together as a team. Other alternatives for our makeshift schools were either under or inside the Buddhist monks's private houses, inside the temples and we used either pieces of clay or charcoals in substitution for chalks. It was during this stage where the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MoEYS) implemented the system of 4+3+3, where great efforts were made to run the campaign to bring youths and children surviving from the regime to schools through the surveys of their capacities and abilities.

With increased progress made and political stability and a need to improve the quality of education, the MoEYS implemented the system of 5+3+3 in 1986. Since 1996, the system of 6+3+3 has been in place.

The 1991 National Conference on "Education For All" was organized and it was meant to find ways to achieve the main goal of ensuring maximum enrolment rate with a focus on quality and equity.

In 1993, based on experiences of Education Sector Development of the poor countries, the MoEYS identified the establishment of cluster schools as a means to further develop education in primary education.

Significant progress has been made in respect to the implementation of strategies of cluster schools for the development of primary education.

The strategies of the cluster schools were evaluated by national and international agencies and seen as progressive and appropriate enough for education development.

II. Certain Indicators Under Previous Implementation:

1. Schools:

There is the establishment of Parent Association in each school, which is now called School Support Committee. The association/committee is normally led by either head of the Buddhist temple, chief of commune/village, clergyman (Achar) or any natural or influential leader in the community. The main role of the association/committee is to assist in the repair and rehabilitation of schools, blackboards, school fences...with school operating budget arising from contributions from the students (prior to the introduction of PAP).

2. Association/School Support Committee :

The organization of the association/committee is in accordance with the instruction issued by the MoEYS.

3. Information Collection:

In order to collect and record information on the performance of each school, the following two strategies are utilized:

- Compile reports/documentation, develop the sample of the report and directory.
- Carry out inspection of monitoring and performance appraisal at all levels, call for a joint meeting to put emphasis on the strengths for implementation and identify constraints in order to improve on a timely basis.

4. Reporting:

All information collected is then reported to a higher level for further actions. Three regular times of reporting is required for each school year, i.e. starting a new academic year, 1st semester and year-end.

5. Supply of reports:

There might be exceptional cases where there is a delay in the flow of the reports from one to another. This is due to remoteness of the locations or a deteriorating condition of the roads.

6. Dissemination/sharing of information:

Information on the performance, good experiences on technical management in teaching and learning and participation of the community is often shared within cluster schools, other schools, districts and provinces through letters of instructions/circulation, meetings, field trips, inspection or workshops/seminars.

III. Proposed changes:

1. Key problems in the performance monitoring:

- Lack of means of transport and budget, which is seen as an obstacle in the implementation of monitoring, strengthening of education services in more remote areas.
- Only 11.57% of the total number of schools were visited in 2003 by the central officials.

- Lack of human resources.

2. Lessons learnt:

A. Effective Inspection Mechanisms:

Central level:

The inspection team is composed of members from:

- Central level (Department of Primary Education)
- Provincial level
- District level

Provincial Level:

- Provincial level
- District level
- Cluster school level

District level:

- District level
- Cluster level
- School heads

Cluster level:

- Cluster level
- School heads (Alliance)
- Chiefs of technical groups

B. Resources for Inspection-related work:

- Well aware of the local situations
- Well-defined goals/purposes
- Appropriate inspection formats
- Availability of human resources capable of performing

C. Contents of Inspection:

- Inspection: Progress
- Inspection: Impact

Phnom Penh, dated.....November 2003
On behalf of Director of Primary Education Department
Deputy

Soy Yeng