

Validation Report
November 2019

Samoa: SchoolNet and Community Access Project

Reference Number: PVR-623
Project Number: 36513-032
Grant Number: 0097



Raising development impact through evaluation

ABBREVIATIONS

ADB	– Asian Development Bank
CAP	– community access program
DMF	– design and monitoring framework
ESPII	– Education Sector Project II
ICT	– information and communication technology
IT	– information technology
MESC	– Ministry of Education, Sports, and Culture
MOF	– Ministry of Finance
PCR	– project completion report
RTII	– Research Triangle Institute International
TA	– technical assistance

NOTE

In this report, “\$” refers to United States dollars.

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PROJECT BASIC DATA

Project Number	36513-032	PCR Circulation Date	6 September 2018	
Grant Number	0097	PCR Validation Date	Nov 2019	
Program Name	SchoolNet and Community Access Project			
Sector and Subsector	Education Information and communication technology	Education sector development Secondary ICT industries and ICT-enabled services		
Strategic Agenda	Inclusive economic growth			
Safeguard Categories	Environment		C	
	Involuntary resettlement		C	
	Indigenous peoples		C	
Country	Independent State of Samoa		Approved (\$ million)	Actual (\$ million)
ADB Financing (\$ million)	ADF: 5.90	Total Project Costs	6.90	6.56
	OCR: 0.00	Loan/Grant	5.90	5.56
		Recipient	1.00	1.00
		Beneficiaries	0.00	0.00
		Others	0.00	0.00
Cofinancier	0.00	Total Cofinancing	0.00	0.00
Approval Date	14 Dec 2007	Effectiveness Date	7 Apr 2008	17 Mar 2008
Signing Date	8 Jan 2008	Closing Date	30 Jun 2013	26 Sep 2016
Project Officers	H. Win	Location ADB headquarters	From Jun 2008	To Dec 2009
	K. Nakamitsu	ADB headquarters	Jan 2010	Nov 2011
	S. Tanaka	ADB headquarters	Nov 2011	Jul 2012
	C. Thonden	ADB headquarters	Jul 2012	Aug 2018
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ADB = Asian Development Bank, ADF = Asian Development Fund, ICT = Information and communication technology, IETC = Thematic and Country Division, OCR = ordinary capital resources, PCR = project completion report.

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I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

A. Rationale

1. The Government of Samoa committed to utilize information and communication technology (ICT) to improve the quality and efficiency of education in the country. The Strategy for the Development of Samoa 2005–2007 outlined the commitments of the government to achieve efficiency and ensure equitable access and quality education for all children.¹ The government and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) agreed to prepare a project to

¹ Government of the Independent State of Samoa. 2005. *Strategy for the Development of Samoa 2005–2007*. Apia.

implement e-learning in the curriculum, provide greater access to appropriate resources, and strengthen ICT capacity of the staff at the Ministry of Education, Sports, and Culture (MESC). The rationale was based on the development needs of Samoa, a small island country in the Pacific region, where more than a third of its working population seek employment overseas. The lack of ICT skills put Samoans at a disadvantage in the global labor market. Schools in rural communities had limited access to adequate e-learning materials and resources, while teachers lacked the necessary skills to facilitate the use of ICT tools to enhance learning.

2. ADB provided grant financing for the SchoolNet and Community Access Project to enhance learning outcomes for secondary students and improve knowledge sharing through equitable ICT access.² The project was designed to complement the Education Sector Project II (ESPII) that aimed to increase equity and the quality of learning for primary and secondary school students.³ The project intended to introduce the use of ICT as a tool to enhance student learning outcomes, manage the education system, and provide e-learning resources to government and mission secondary schools. It targeted schools in all 22 districts of Samoa to ensure ICT access for 1,500 secondary students, aimed to develop the capacity of 800 schoolteachers, and provide ICT access to 22 local communities.

3. The project completion report (PCR) indicated that the stand-alone investment project modality was justified. The project supplemented the objectives of the ESPII and provided secondary schools with computer equipment, e-learning resources, and training for teachers and local communities.⁴

B. Expected Impacts, Outcomes, and Outputs

4. The expected impact of the project was a more equitable and effective ICT-enhanced education system and promotion of life-long learning. Its target outcome was enhanced learning outcomes for secondary students and improved knowledge sharing through ICT (footnote 2, Appendix 1).

5. The target outputs of the project were divided into four components—(i) improved quality of teaching and learning through e-learning materials and approaches, (ii) improved education access through ICT, (iii) established partnerships to support SchoolNet and Community Access Program, and (iv) strengthened education management through ICT systems. Each component's target outputs were as follows:

- (i) Component 1: (a) developed e-curriculum capacity and distribution, (b) developed e-teaching capacity, and (c) strengthened management capacity;
- (ii) Component 2: (a) installed SchoolNet equipment and connectivity, (b) integrated SchoolNet pilot, (c) extended network to connect MESC, (d) a strengthened data center and portal, and (e) strengthened MESC ICT capacity;
- (iii) Component 3: (a) community access of SchoolNet conducted, (b) SchoolNet efficiently managed and community access program (CAP) established, and (c) signed agreement on partnership development; and

² ADB. 2007. *Report and Recommendation of the President to the Board of Directors: Proposed Asian Development Fund Grant to the Independent State of Samoa for the SchoolNet and Community Access Project*. Manila.

³ ADB. 2005. *Report and Recommendation of the President to the Board of Directors: Proposed Loan and Technical Assistance Grant to the Independent State of Samoa for the Education Sector Project II*. Manila.

⁴ ADB. 2018. *Completion Report: SchoolNet and Community Access Project in the Independent State of Samoa*. Manila.

- (iv) Component 4: (a) strengthened data collection; and (b) evaluated impact, developed medium-term expenditure framework, financial framework, and coordinated reporting, auditing, and reviewing.

C. Provision of Inputs

6. The ADB Board approved the project in December 2007, the government signed the grant agreement in January 2008, and became effective in March 2008. The project closed in January 2016 against the planned June 2013. Its financial closing was in September 2016, a delay of 39 months. Four extensions were approved for the project to (i) complete all outputs and finance outstanding commitments to consultants and suppliers, (ii) provide time for e-coaching to ensure the effective use of e-learning resources, and (iii) procure additional computer equipment and learning software upgrades.

7. The total project cost at appraisal was \$6.9 million. ADB provided a grant of \$5.9 million from its special fund resources.⁵ The government was to contribute \$1.0 million in taxes and duties and cover the cost of counterpart staff. The actual project cost at completion was \$6.6 million with an undisbursed loan amount of \$0.3 million, while the government fulfilled its commitment of \$1.0 million. The cost of consulting services increased from \$2.3 million to \$2.9 million and that of learning content development from \$0.3 million to \$0.5 million resulted from the extension of project completion and grant closing dates.

8. There were two consultancy services packages. First, the MESCS package had 5 months for a project management adviser, 4 months for an education management information systems specialist, 4 months for an education economist, and 8 months of unallocated services. Second, MESCS contracted the Research Triangle Institute International (RTII) to support project implementation involving 57 person-months of international and 100 person-months of national consultants. In total, the project allocated 72 person-months of international and 108 person-months of national consultants. Engaging the consulting firm was delayed since it took time to comply with the government procurement procedures.⁶ Their work began in 2009. There were no significant issues or deviations in the consulting contract and the firm performed satisfactorily (footnote 4, para. 31).

9. The project was category C for environment, involuntary resettlement, and indigenous peoples. The PCR noted that the project did not have any negative environment or social impacts on indigenous peoples. The project purchased and installed ICT equipment in secondary schools and did not involve construction works, hence there were no environmental or social safeguard impacts.

D. Implementation Arrangements

10. The executing agency for the project was the Ministry of Finance (MOF) and MESCS was the implementing agency. During appraisal, MESCS agreed to establish a separate project unit, but after the approval of the project, administration was merged with that of the ESPII. The education steering committee for the project provided oversight. There was also a technical advisory committee with representatives from the relevant ministries.⁷ The core executive team

⁵ A pilot project was conducted prior to the project from 16 February 2004 to 31 July 2007.

⁶ Even small value local consulting contracts required an approval by the Attorney General.

⁷ According to the report and recommendation of the President, the technical advisory committee was supposed to include the private sector companies. However, based on the project's design, IT companies would participate in the

of MESC and the secretariat of the education steering committee were responsible for daily project management. The project coordinator at MESC for the ESPII acted as the project manager and provided limited coordination between the project and the ESPII. RTII consultants supported MESC in the project implementation. All project financial statements were audited.

11. The project did not have any attached technical assistance (TA). Prior to approval, ADB provided a transaction TA for the Samoa SchoolNet and Community Access Pilot Project that supported five schools, including one primary school.⁸ The three target outputs of the TA that laid out the ground work for the project were to (i) demonstrate the applicability of SchoolNet and CAP approaches, (ii) implement plans and policies for the SchoolNet and community access facilities, and (iii) improve the teacher training curriculum and materials for distance learning. ADB took account of the lessons learned in designing the project.

12. The project design identified potential risks relating to its complexity and the capacity of MESC to implement, the likelihood of rapid changes in technology, and the need to take advantages of evolving opportunities. These risks were to be flexibly mitigated, extensions to address long delays in procurement, and the cancellation of the CAP subcomponent. MESC incorporated the project with the ESPII and used the same coordination structure. The design and monitoring framework (DMF) of the project was integrated into the MESC monitoring and evaluation framework. MESC included the key indicators but did not use the DMF as a monitoring tool.

13. There were 22 grant covenants, of which 19 were complied with. This validation notes that the three covenants that were partially complied with were under schedule 4 of the grant agreement related to the project implementation,⁹ while “to establish and monitor community access to the learning centers” under the same schedule was not implemented at all. MESC contracted external finance audit for the financial statements of the project.

II. EVALUATION OF PERFORMANCE AND RATINGS

A. Relevance of Design and Formulation

14. The PCR rated the project relevant. The target of enhanced learning outcomes for secondary students and improved knowledge sharing through ICT was aligned with the priorities of the country to promote ICT and introduce it in education. Upon project completion, there was greater awareness that the use of technology in education was important and was dependent on the quality of teaching and motivation of the teachers. However, the project design assumed incorrectly that teachers wanted to learn to use ICT. Teachers’ interests in using ICT and their initial capacity to do it should have been assessed. The project design should have strongly emphasized the capacity development on the subject content and the training support to teachers on the use of ICT to improve the student learning outcomes.

15. Weak design and assumptions influenced the relevance of the project on improved knowledge sharing. The 2010 survey results on CAP showed that there was little community demand to use the SchoolNet learning centers and that expectations for cost recovery were

bidding process for computer supply. Considered as a conflict of interest, the private companies were excluded from the committee.

⁸ ADB. 2003. *Technical Assistance to the Independent State of Samoa for Supporting the Samoa SchoolNet and Community Access Pilot Project*. Manila.

⁹ ADB. 2008. *Grant Agreement (Special Operations) between the Independent State of Samoa and the Asian Development Bank for the SchoolNet and Community Access Project*. Manila.

unrealistic. School staff and parents also preferred to use schools for children's education. In part, this was driven by the widespread availability of mobile phones for data access. MESC considered the CAP irrelevant to the main objective of the project and cancelled it in December 2011. It retained the subcomponent on the advocacy and awareness plan activities. In retrospect, the CAP should not have been included under the SchoolNet project. This reduced the project scope. However, ADB did not initiate a change in scope to restructure the project or revise the DMF to update the performance targets and indicators.

16. Initially, MESC did not have a strong project ownership in view of the requirements of multi-donor-financed ESPII. MESC perceived it as purely an ICT project. ADB overestimated the capacity of MESC to implement ICT that would require close coordination between MESC divisions. MESC also had weak capacity and lacked incentives to monitor project outcomes. Based on MESC's institutional weaknesses, ADB should have prepared and implemented a comprehensive training plan for the staff on project administration, which could have avoided long delays.¹⁰

17. This validation has the same view as the PCR that the DMF was inappropriate. The outcome statement of enhanced learning outcomes for secondary students and improved knowledge sharing could not have been expected by 2013. This would have been more appropriate at the impact level. The DMF neither had the necessary nor appropriate outcome and output performance targets, and the baseline data was insufficient. MESC did not use the project's DMF; instead, it incorporated the project's key indicators in the ESPII's monitoring and evaluation framework. RTII consultants monitored the DMF indicators until their contract ended in 2013. Due to MESC's insufficient capacity, the project was inadequately monitored while ADB failed to update the DMF or revise the indicators after the change in scope.

18. Of greater concern was the lack of a formal adjustment in the scope, design, and DMF of the project. While ADB did attempt to address these issues, this was not undertaken through a formal process. Without this process, any change was informal and, therefore, could be reflected in the discussion of relevance or efficacy below. This validation, therefore, assesses the project less than relevant.

B. Effectiveness in Achieving Project Outcomes and Outputs

19. The PCR rated the project effective. Of the four outcome indicators, one was achieved, one partially achieved, and two did not have enough data to report on. This validation finds that the outcome of the enhanced student learning achievement cannot be fully attributed to the project outputs. It is impossible to assess the project's performance with the lack of midterm and completion data surveys at the start of the project and at completion.

20. The PCR stated that all outputs from the DMF were achieved (footnote 4, para. 51). The project did not have a gender action plan, nor there was gender disaggregated data included in the DMF. The outcome indicator on creation of an e-library with 33,273 resources in all secondary schools was achieved, but this was more of an output indicator. The outcome indicator relating to the teachers' use of ICT did not include monitoring data to assess how many teachers actually used ICT and e-learning materials, and to what extent. By completion, almost all teachers had basic ICT skills, the pedagogical skills of teachers needed to be improved to significantly

¹⁰ ADB Inception Mission in June 2004 provided one briefing session to relevant MESC staff on project administration, consulting services, procurement, disbursement arrangements, and conditions for withdrawal from the grant account, counterpart funds, and reporting and auditing requirements.

influence the student learning outcome. For the management and coordination purposes, the project was informally incorporated into the ESP II as its sixth component. While this increased ownership, ADB and MESC lost focus on monitoring the DMF outcome and outputs. As noted above, the lack of a formal restructuring does not allow full credit for the project changes.

21. **Output One.** Of the six indicators, four were achieved and two were not achieved. The first output focused on improved quality of teaching and learning through e-learning materials and approaches. At completion, the project achieved some of its sub-outputs. The ICT competency framework was integrated into the teacher development framework. In 2014, MESC adopted and disseminated e-resources on curriculum and learning materials for six subjects to 42 secondary schools' servers. On strengthened management capacity, 33% of teachers and principals were trained on methods to manage learning centers and computer rooms. The role of school resource officers was reduced and disintegrated, thus, this sub-output was not achieved. The sub-output on developing e-teaching capacity was achieved since the project engaged trainers to upgrade content knowledge of teachers first and then showed them how to use ICT in their teaching and learning. The PCR of the government stated that almost all teachers developed necessary skills to access and use SchoolNet resources, as they demonstrated competency in delivering a sample lesson to trainers.¹¹ However, the PCR noted that schoolteachers still prefer traditional ways of teaching in class.

22. **Output Two.** Based on the PCR, five of the six indicators were achieved, and one was not achieved. The second output focused on the improved education access through ICT. At completion, all sub-outputs related to equipment rollout to 40 schools and the National University of Samoa were achieved. A data center and portal at MESC were installed in 2013. The project introduced over 300 teachers to e-resources and provided coaches to support staff and teachers in the use of ICT tools. All secondary schools, MESC divisions, and units were connected to the SchoolNet wide-access network in 2014. The project's associated transaction TA rolled out five pilots supported in 2013. The project did not fully achieve the sub-output of strengthened MESC ICT capacity. Only two staff of the information technology (IT) unit of MESC successfully completed two Cisco Network Academy courses. However, MESC's ICT capacity remains inadequate.

23. **Output Three.** All three indicators were not achieved. The third output intended to establish partnerships to support the SchoolNet and Community Access Program. At completion, this was not achieved since it was cancelled in December 2011.¹² However, the project was not restructured to reflect the changed project design and DMF. MESC carried out activities on the advocacy and awareness plan, published 12 newspaper articles, presented updates at its annual education conferences and at an international conference, sponsored a special ICT prize at three science fairs, developed and disseminated seven SchoolNet updates and several flyers and posters on the project among schools, and broadcasted seven TV clips (footnote 11, p. 14).

24. **Output Four.** Of the five indicators, two were achieved, one was partially achieved, and two were not achieved. The fourth output focused on strengthened education management through ICT systems. All students received a unique student education identifier number under the database. The database is fully functional and being used successfully for school administration and assessment registration.

¹¹ Government of Samoa, Ministry of Education, Sports, and Culture of Samoa. 2015. *Completion Report for the SchoolNet and Community Access Project*. Apia.

¹² The project review mission reports did not provide detailed information on the exact date when this output was cancelled.

25. At completion, the project did not achieve the sub-output on the strengthened data collection and analysis as envisioned. According to the project documents, the capacity of MESC in data collection and analysis needed to be strengthened. MESC lacked capacity to collect and analyze data. The project design was overambitious to establish a unified data system because it was unachievable within the project scope and timeframe. The sub-output on developing the midterm expenditure and financial frameworks was not achieved, and at completion, changes in the use of technology rendered this output irrelevant. Given the combined evidence and the number of output targets that were not fully achieved, this validation assesses the project less than effective.

C. Efficiency of Resource Use

26. The PCR rated the project likely efficient. It indicated that the project covered 40 secondary schools in Samoa that benefited over 90,000 students and 5,500 teachers with improvements contributed to their classroom teaching. In 2013, the review mission reported that the project had not begun the school-level implementation, which was one of the major outputs.¹³ The project's long implementation period—8 years instead of 5—negatively affected its efficiency. The PCR and project review mission reports indicated that the SchoolNet rollout to all schools only began after 2013, a year after the initially planned completion date. Until that time, only five schools under the pilot TA and the prototype SchoolNet learning center were the project's beneficiaries (footnote 4, p. 12). The project had four extensions without cost overruns.

27. The delays in project completion were caused by the weak institutional capacity of MESC resulting from high staff turnover that had its effect on project administration, procurement, and monitoring. MESC staff were overburdened with numerous routine responsibilities and were also expected to implement two projects from different financing partners.¹⁴ There were delays as suppliers could not obtain many of the goods in a small local market. Finally, there were delays in establishing a wide-area network by a national telecommunication company. The project accomplished a cost-effective way to achieve its desired outcomes, after informal changes. Likewise, the project delays were in line with other projects in the Pacific and reflected efforts to coordinate the project with other education activities. This validation assesses the project efficient.

D. Preliminary Assessment of Sustainability

28. The PCR rated the project likely sustainable. Despite the target outcome of improved student learning contributed by the SchoolNet outputs was not achieved, MESC demonstrated better ownership of initiatives to improve and sustain the students learning outcomes. The sustainability of these efforts related to changing mind-sets within the broader education community of the ministry and school staff, parents, and students will help them see and utilize the advantages of ICT in education and contribute to the learning outcomes improvements.

29. On the whole, the outputs on e-learning were sustainable since these were aligned with the national curriculum. ICT competency was included in the national teacher competency framework and in pre-service programs for teachers. MESC also partnered with the University of the South Pacific to train science and math teachers to upgrade their ICT skills. Teachers used the SchoolNet project network to study through distance-learning courses. The costs of updating

¹³ ADB (Pacific Department). 2013. Review Mission to Samoa: School Net and Community Access Project. Back-to-office report. 13 April (internal).

¹⁴ ADB, the Australian Department of Finance and Trade, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of New Zealand cofinanced the ESPII.

the e-curriculum were inexpensive and MESC included them in its budget. The sustainability of the technical support of the project outputs was under the IT unit of MESC for the technical and maintenance support to the e-learning resource centers.

30. According to the report of ADB review mission in February 2014, sustainability of the SchoolNet was a concern after the output on CAP was cancelled as reflected in the midterm expenditure framework, indicating efficiencies that resulted in lower projected costs for schools.¹⁵ MESC provided grants to cover the electricity cost of ICT learning centers located within the schools. In addition, the governments of Australia and New Zealand provided a budgetary support under the MESC education plan that also covered the ICT in education. Considering the likelihood of funding, institutional, and technical provisions, this validation assesses the project likely sustainable.

III. OTHER PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENTS

A. Preliminary Assessment of Development Impact

31. The PCR rated the development impact of the project less than satisfactory. The targeted project themes were related to inclusive social development and capacity development, with subthemes on human development and organizational development. This validation finds it challenging to attribute all achieved and in-progress outcomes under the project to the intended impact of a more equitable and effective ICT-enhanced education system and promotion of life-long learning.

32. The intended impact could have been achieved had it been based on a stronger project design and more realistic assumptions. The PCR stated that MESC and MOF considered the project to be ahead of its time and served to start the important pathway of building the ICT competencies of the youth in Samoa. All secondary school students and teachers have access and could use the e-learning centers and its resources. The PCR of the government noted that the project provided capacity development training to teachers, and e-learning resources for the science, technology, engineering, and math curricula to all secondary schools in the country (footnote 11, p. 13). Also, the public awareness campaigns raised understanding among the education community on the benefits of ICT in education and on the importance of acquiring ICT skills. However, the project assumptions that the ICT in education would bring a more equitable and effective ICT-enhanced education system and the promotion of life-long learning were unrealistic.

33. The PCR noted that the main association of the project, and interest in it, was with general internet access rather than the offline e-resources. At completion, students and teachers' demand for internet seemed to be for the use of social media rather than for education purposes. Thus, the computers and the school intranet were underutilized. There was increased enrollment at tertiary level, but no evidence for improved employment rates of high school graduates. This validation has similar views with the PCR and assesses the development impact of the project less than satisfactory.

¹⁵ ADB (Pacific Department). 2014. Review Mission to Samoa: School Net and Community Access Project. Back-to-office report. 13 March (internal).

B. Performance of the Recipient and Executing Agency

34. The PCR rated the performance of MESC as the grant recipient and implementing agency, and MOF as the executing agency satisfactory. The PCR stated that MESC's ownership of the project increased substantially by completion. In particular, MESC assumed responsibility of the project and designated its own IT unit to continue such initiatives. According to the PCR of the government, the frequent restructuring of divisions within MESC affected membership of the project committees and working groups, and their commitment to achieving the project outcomes.

35. MESC required continuous strengthening of its financial management capacity, which MOF supported. The use of different monitoring and evaluation frameworks led to inadequate monitoring of project targets and less than satisfactory reporting requirements. The focus was on the entire monitoring and evaluation system of MESC rather than that of the project.¹⁶ Nevertheless, MESC managed to achieve most project outputs. This validation assesses the performance of the grant recipient and the implementing agency satisfactory.

C. Performance of the Asian Development Bank

36. The PCR rated the performance of ADB satisfactory. Although designed as a separate project, in practice, the project was implemented as a part of the ESPII. ADB fielded one inception, eight review, and one project completion missions with 53 person days of input, including those of an education specialist, social sector specialist, project administration unit head, associate project analyst, and a consultant. More attention could have been given to proper record keeping and updating the SchoolNet implementation status in the mission review reports, which often reported a brief general information without detailed description of implementation issues.

37. Despite continuous challenges for MESC to manage ADB procurement and financial procedures, ADB provided only one project administration training course to MESC and the project secretariat staff. However, this was addressed by the effort to coordinate the project more closely with other education projects.

38. The lack of a board paper represents a serious shortcoming on the part of ADB. While there were several attempts to change the scope and outcome, these did not appear to be backed by a corresponding major change. ADB failed to address critical issues of project monitoring and evaluation. It did not adjust the target dates for monitoring project performance after it was extended. Despite the various "potential problem" ratings that ensued, the midterm review mission that was carried out concurrently with that of the ESPII did not cover all outstanding implementation issues. The report on ADB review mission undertaken in May 2014 acknowledged that some of the project outputs and outcomes either were unrealistic or could not be measured. The mission recommended the revision of the DMF performance indicators by June 2014. However, no actions could be noted related to the change of scope or to update the DMF and its performance targets. This validation assesses the performance of ADB less than satisfactory.

¹⁶ The overall monitoring and evaluation system at MESC was developed with the support of the ESPII.

IV. OVERALL ASSESSMENT, LESSONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Overall Assessment and Ratings

39. The PCR rated the project successful following those of relevant, effective, likely efficient, and likely sustainable. This validation assesses the project less than successful for its revised ratings of less than relevant, less than effective, efficient, and likely sustainable.

Overall Ratings

Validation Criteria	PCR	IED Review	Reason for Disagreement and/or Comments
Relevance	Relevant	Less than relevant	Weak assumptions regarding teacher interest in ICT and the community access program, inadequate DMF performance targets, and overestimated capacity of MESCS undermined the relevance.
Effectiveness	Effective	Less than effective	Eight output targets of the project DMF were not achieved, while two outcome targets have no data to report on.
Efficiency	Likely efficient	Efficient	
Sustainability	Likely sustainable	Likely sustainable	
Overall Assessment	Successful	Less than successful	Due to weak assumptions, inadequate DMF performance targets, unachieved outcome and output targets, and long implementation period.
Preliminary Assessment of Impact	Less than satisfactory	Less than satisfactory	
Borrower and executing agency	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	
Performance of ADB	Satisfactory	Less than satisfactory	ADB neither adjusted the project scope nor updated the DMF after the community access program output was dropped. ADB failed to provide adequate training on project administration to MESCS.
Quality of PCR		Satisfactory	Para. 44.

ADB = Asian Development Bank; DMF = design and monitoring framework; ICT = information and communication technology; IED = Independent Evaluation Department; MESCS = Ministry of Education, Sports, and Culture; and PCR = project completion report.

Source: Asian Development Bank and Independent Evaluation Department.

B. Lessons

40. The PCR identified five lessons: (i) the name of the project is important in setting and managing expectations; (ii) technology is important, but its use is dependent on, and not a substitute for, teachers using student-centered pedagogy; (iii) strong theory of change that articulates how to improve learning is essential; (iv) a focus on children aged 12 and 13 years is too late to improve their learning significantly; and (v) starting small and phasing activities is likely to deliver more sustainable results.

41. This validation supports the above lessons, and adds the following:

- (i) **Project level lesson.** A complex and ambitious project needs to be built on solid analysis, otherwise the potential innovation is likely to fail. The project did not consider the demand for some of its activities, particularly community participation. It is crucial to conduct a thorough analysis on a demand for an output based on

findings and observations of a pilot project prior to including such outputs into a final project design. With adequate planning, an alternative model could have been developed.

- (ii) **Project administration and DMF lesson.** While cross-project collaboration are potentially powerful tools to achieve multiple objectives and reduce costs, it requires thought and planning, and the benefits are not automatic. When the project DMF was merged with the overall education monitoring and evaluation framework, MESC and ADB neglected to monitor the DMF performance targets of the project. This reflected the institutional culture and capacity constraints of MESC and indicated ADB's lack of focus on the project.

C. Recommendations for Follow-Up

42. This validation supports the recommendations of the PCR. The development and implementation of the education management information system is a practical step for improving a data collection methodology and source for monitoring the education outcomes and impact, and for strategic planning purposes. This should be hosted and managed by MESC with data entered by all schools.

V. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS AND FOLLOW-UP

A. Monitoring and Reporting

43. The DMF of the project needs to ensure that all indicators are monitorable and measurable, and have realistic targets, which are linked to outcome and impact performance indicators with full baseline data and indicate a year period to achieve. A design flaw of this project was the weak DMF with unclear performance targets, thus, it was difficult to substantiate the contribution of the project to the achieved outcomes and impact.

B. Comments on Project Completion Report Quality

44. The PCR provided a detailed review of project implementation and covered the necessary requirements on project completion. It contained a candid analysis of issues that affected implementation, but it failed to analyze or explain why there were neither changes to the project scope nor revisions in the DMF. Changes in scope would have been appropriate given that CAP was cancelled and there were four extensions. Despite the two major shortcomings of the PCR (i) on lack of data upon completion; and (ii) an inadequate assessment of relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency, this validation assesses the PCR quality satisfactory.

C. Data Sources for Validation

45. Data sources used for this validation were the reports and recommendations of the President for the project and the related ESPII, ADB's and the government's PCRs, mission review reports, and memorandum of understanding prepared by the joint review missions.

D. Recommendation for Independent Evaluation Department Follow-Up

46. A separate project performance evaluation is not required. However, if the Independent Evaluation Department is to prepare a project performance evaluation report on the ESPII, then this project should be included.