

Validation Report
September 2021

Vanuatu: Cyclone Pam School Reconstruction Project

Reference Number: PVR-819
Project Number: 49320–001
Grant Number: 9181



Raising development impact through evaluation

ABBREVIATIONS

ADB	– Asian Development Bank
DSC	– design and supervision consultant
GAP	– gender action plan
JFPR	– Japan Fund for Poverty Reduction
JICA	– Japan International Cooperation Agency
JSS	– junior secondary school
MOET	– Ministry of Education and Training
NPV	– net present value
NRESP	– National Recovery and Economic Strengthening Program
PDNA	– post disaster needs assessment
PMU	– project management unit

NOTE

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

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PROJECT BASIC DATA

Project number	49320–001	PCR circulation date	8 Jun 2021	
Grant number	9181	PCR validation date	Sep 2021	
Project name	Cyclone Pam School Reconstruction Project			
Sector and subsector	Education	Education sector development		
Strategic agenda	Environmentally sustainable growth Inclusive economic growth			
Safeguard categories	Environment		B	
	Involuntary resettlement		C	
	Indigenous peoples		C	
Country	Vanuatu		Approved (\$ million)	Actual (\$ million)
ADB financing (\$ million)	ADF: 0.00	Total project costs	5.72	5.64
	OCR: 0.00	Loan	0.00	0.00
		Borrower	0.72	0.72
		Beneficiaries	0.00	0.00
		Others	0.00	0.00
Cofinancier	Japan Fund for Poverty Reduction	Total cofinancing	5.00	4.92
Approval date	16 Nov 2015	Effectiveness date	18 Feb 2016	3 Mar 2016
Signing date	20 Nov 2015	Grant closing date Financial closing date	30 Jun 2018 –	30 Jun 2020 24 Aug 2020
Project officers	R. R. Adhar P. Indrawansa S. L. Bow A. Ahonen P. Indrawansa S. Mehta	Location PLCO PLCO PLCO PLCO PLCO PLCO	From Oct 2015 Aug 2016 Mar 2017 Nov 2019 Jan 2020 May 2020	To Aug 2016 Mar 2017 Oct 2019 Jan 2020 Apr 2020 Aug 2020
IED review				
Director	N. Subramaniam, IESP			
Team leader	F. De Guzman, IESP*			

ADB = Asian Development Bank, ADF = Asian Development Fund, IED = Independent Evaluation Department, IESP = Sector and Project Division, OCR = ordinary capital resources, PLCO = Pacific Liaison and Coordination Office, PCR = project completion report.

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I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

A. Rationale

1. Vanuatu's 22 islands suffered massive destruction when severe Tropical Cyclone Pam (classified as Category-5) hit the country in March 2015. About 17,000 buildings were destroyed and around 65,000 people were displaced, including more than 34,600 school children that were affected. Large scale destruction of crops affected the livelihoods of at least 80% of Vanuatu's rural population. The total damage to the economy was estimated at \$441.4 million or about 64.1% of Vanuatu's gross domestic product.¹ Multilateral development partners supported the post disaster needs assessment (PDNA) initiated by the government.² The PDNA identified Tafea and Shefa as the provinces that suffered the most. In line with the PDNA's findings, the

¹ ADB. 2015. *Report and Recommendation of the President to the Board of Directors: Proposed Administration of Grant to the Republic of Vanuatu for the Cyclone Pam School Reconstruction Project*. Manila.

² The multilateral development partners included the Asian Development Bank, the World Bank, the governments of Australia and New Zealand, the United Nations, and other development organizations.

government prepared the National Recovery and Economic Strengthening Program (NRESP)³ to enable recovery and rehabilitation.

2. In August 2015, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) received a request for emergency assistance from the government of Vanuatu to support the country's post-cyclone recovery and rehabilitation efforts, specifically in the education sector and with emphasis on school infrastructure. In response to this request, a grant was provided by the Japan Fund for Poverty Reduction (JFPR) for the Cyclone Pam School Reconstruction Project (the project).⁴ Tafea, which is one of Vanuatu's remote provinces, was prioritized because many schools suffered substantial damages. The proposed rehabilitation was to focus on one of its islands (Tanna Island⁵), as it experienced the most damage.⁶

3. The rationale for the project hinged on the reconstruction of junior secondary schools (JSS) as it was important to normalize the students' lives after Tropical Cyclone Pam. Thus, providing a safer learning environment and minimizing delay in the resumption of educational services were imperative. However, in view of the widespread damage, the government was financially strained to finance all rehabilitation efforts; hence, the government requested for financial assistance.

4. Given the small-scale nature of this emergency assistance project, a grant modality was appropriate in mitigating immediate losses through the rebuilding of high-priority educational facilities. The project was intended to support around 1,200 school children and strengthen the ability of the targeted school buildings to withstand disasters. It was also aimed at providing temporary shelters to communities during disasters.

B. Expected Impact, Outcome, and Outputs

5. The project's envisaged impact was accelerated recovery in Vanuatu's cyclone-affected provinces. Its expected outcome was the resumption of critical education services with disaster-resilient infrastructure. The project's targeted outputs were: (i) rebuilding and/or upgrading of schools in Tafea Province; and (ii) capacity-strengthening of communities and the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) for disaster risk reduction management and preparedness.

C. Provision of Inputs

6. In November 2015, ADB approved a \$5.0 million JFPR grant for emergency assistance to support reconstruction of five JSSs at Tanna Island in Tafea Province. The project became effective in March 2016, around three months after the grant signing, and was expected to be closed in June 2018. The grant was extended for 24 months following ADB's approval in December 2017⁷ and closed in June 2020, which was two years later from the expected closing date. In view of the emergency nature of the project, a single-source selection method for recruitment of a design and supervision consultant (DSC) was preferred for the project. However, the use of the single-source selection method was not applied due to the

³ Government of Vanuatu. 2015. *National Recovery and Economic Strengthening Program Plan*. Port Vila.

⁴ Footnote 1.

⁵ Tanna is the largest of five islands in Tafea Province that accounts for about 88% of the province's population.

⁶ Five junior secondary schools on Tanna Island were selected based on the (i) schools' strategic location, (ii) feasibility and cost-effectiveness of repairing damages, and (iii) size of the school and the potential for either rationalization or expansion.

⁷ ADB (Pacific Department) 2017. Grant 9181: Cyclone Pam School Reconstruction Project of Vanuatu. Approval of an Extension of Completion Date: Memorandum. 12 December (internal).

disagreement on commercial rates. This led to the recruitment of another DSC firm using a quality and cost-based selection, which resulted in cumulative start-up delays of 10 months. There was also a 3-month delay in finalizing bidding documents (PCR, para. 19). The 12-month works contract started in October 2018, which was extended by four months. All of these contributed to the 2-year delay in implementation.

7. At appraisal, the project cost was estimated at \$5.72 million to be sourced from the JFPR grant (\$5.0 million) and the government's contribution (\$0.72 million).⁸ The actual project cost was reduced to \$5.64 million, 87% of which was financed by the JFPR and the balance was shouldered by the government. The project's original intent was to rehabilitate five schools. However, its scope was revised to accommodate the involvement of other donors. Thus, a minor change in scope was issued in March 2019 to revise the targeted rehabilitation from five to four schools (Ienaula, Imaki, Kwataparen, and Lowiepeng). This was to avoid duplication of efforts and better utilize resources.⁹ Also, this action enabled the accommodation of additional construction works for the four schools from \$3.02 million at appraisal, to \$3.58 million at completion.

8. The recruitment of consultants followed ADB's Guidelines on the Use of Consultants (2013, as amended from time to time). A locally based international nongovernment organization was subcontracted by the DSC to implement the capacity building, gender action plan (GAP), and communicable diseases awareness and prevention activities. The envisaged inputs from consultants were 24 person-months of international consulting services and 41 person-months of national consulting services. The actual services provided were 29.8 person-months of international consultant inputs and 26.0 person-months of national consultants' services.¹⁰ The performance of consultants was assessed satisfactory by the project completion report (PCR).¹¹

9. In terms of safeguards, the project was classified category B for the environment. As an emergency response, an environmental assessment and review framework was formulated to guide the overall identification and management of environmental risks. An environmental management plan was prepared for each of the four schools, which identified environmental impacts and the mitigation measures that were to be implemented. On the whole, environmental safeguards were managed well during implementation. Construction camps were well maintained. There were no reported adverse effects on the environment.

10. The project was categorized C for both the involuntary resettlement and the indigenous peoples. The JSSs had land leases, including the area for the construction of new buildings when the project was approved. All civil works were conducted within these lease boundaries.

11. The project was classified as effective gender mainstreaming, and a GAP was prepared. The GAP focused on increasing girls' participation and retention in secondary education; strengthening the resilience of women and girls to future disasters and climate change risks; and building capacity for provincial institutions and school communities.

⁸ Costs included civil works for school rehabilitation, disaster preparedness, consulting, community capacity building, project management, contingency and recurrent costs.

⁹ ADB (Pacific Department). 2019. Minor change in scope: Cyclone Pam School Reconstruction Project. Memorandum. 25 March (internal).

¹⁰ These included oversight for final design and costing, preparation of tender documents, bill of quantities, tendering, contract management and supervision, and day-to-day project implementation.

¹¹ ADB. 2021. *Completion Report: Cyclone Pam School Reconstruction Project in Vanuatu*. Manila.

D. Implementation Arrangements

12. As envisaged, the Ministry of Finance and Economic Management was the executing agency, while the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) was the implementing agency. A project management unit (PMU) was established within the facilities of MOET to oversee the day-to-day implementation and progress monitoring. The support of the DSC strengthened the PMU's existing technical, safeguards, and managerial capacities to integrate the build-back-better concepts¹² with disaster resilient and climate proof standards. The project steering committee, chaired by the acting director general of the MOET, met regularly and provided the necessary guidance. The implementation arrangements were adequate to deliver the expected outputs and outcome.

13. Of the 50 grant covenants, 47 were complied with, 2 were partly complied with, and 1 was not complied with. The agreement to use the single-source selection method for selecting and engaging consulting services was not complied with. The failed negotiation with the preferred firm led to the use of quality and cost-based selection, which resulted in a more transparent and enhanced competition for firm selection. The partly complied with covenants were (i) on the monitoring of the GAP, which was not regularly reported in the quarterly progress reports and (ii) the final audited project financial statement (APFS) for 2020. The final APFS has not yet been submitted as of the preparation of the PCR.¹³

II. EVALUATION OF PERFORMANCE AND RATINGS

A. Relevance of Design and Formulation

14. The PCR rated the project relevant. It indicated that the project was consistent with the government's NRESP (2015) and ADB's overall policies. Also, the project's focus on Tanna Island was appropriate since it accounted for 88% of the Tafea's population. The PCR also indicated that the use of grant modality was suitable. The project's design was considered sound since it was based on build-back-better principles. The PCR justified the reduction in the number of schools from five to four to avoid duplication and enable a more comprehensive intervention within the limited budget. Moreover, the PCR assessed as reasonable both the original and revised design and monitoring frameworks. However, it noted that the impact statement should have been reflective of the specific support to the education sector. Also, the outcome target should have been specific to the number of schools supported by the project to highlight better the project's specific development outcome.

15. At a strategic level, this validation assesses that the project was consistent with the government's NRESP, which outlined the priorities for recovery and reconstruction over the next two years. The project was also in line with ADB's country partnership strategy for Vanuatu that supported improvements in infrastructure services, the removal of major constraints on economic growth, and efforts to reduce rural poverty.¹⁴ Likewise, this project was aligned with

¹² The use of the recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction phases after a disaster were intended to increase the resilience of nations and communities through integrating disaster risk reduction measures into (i) the restoration of physical infrastructure and societal systems, and (ii) the revitalization of livelihoods, economies, and the environment.

¹³ The APFS for FY2017 was received on time, but submission of FY2018 was received on 24 October 2019, which constituted a delay of four months. The 2016 APFS was deferred at the request of the recipient because the project did not incur expenses due to delayed start-up. The APFS for 2020 was scheduled to be delivered by 30 June 2021.

¹⁴ ADB. 2009. *Country Partnership Strategy: Vanuatu, 2010–2014*. Manila.

ADB's Pacific Approach 2010–2014, which was aimed at delivering sustained, resilient, and better standards of living for the people of the Pacific.¹⁵ Thus, this validation finds that the project's strategic importance was well established.

16. This validation notes that the project's design allowed for a timely and twifold response to the development needs in the disaster area. First, the project helped in facilitating the return to normalcy of students' lives through the rebuilding and rehabilitation of school and related facilities. Second, school shelters were provided, including capacity building for future calamities in the area. Most of these shelters, which were newly constructed school buildings, double up as evacuation centers. Existing buildings were retrofitted, repaired, and repurposed to serve as classrooms and offices among other things. However, the structural conditions of these buildings could not be accurately ascertained; thus most were not repurposed for shelters. Instead the new buildings were designed to serve as shelters. Also, this validation assesses that the approved minor change in scope was appropriate and helped ensure that the project's design remained relevant. This minor change in scope covered: (i) amending the description of output 1,¹⁶ (ii) changing indicator 1a from five schools to four, and (iii) changing the milestone dates of key activities.¹⁷ This validation shares the same view that the reduction in the number of schools allowed additional construction works to be undertaken.

17. In view of the need for a rapid response in the aftermath of the disaster, this validation assesses that some degree of flexibility was needed in terms of the project's scope during the preparatory phase, especially on the precise location of the rehabilitation works and the need to harmonize efforts and resources from other development partners. Based on the above discussion, this validation assesses the project relevant.

B. Effectiveness in Achieving Project Outcome and Outputs

18. The PCR rated the project effective as the outcome target and all five output indicators were achieved. It also indicated that the GAP was successfully implemented.

19. This validation finds that the envisaged outcome on the resumption of critical education services with disaster-resilient infrastructure was achieved. The outcome target pertained to the restoration of enrollment rates in JSS for boys and girls to 60% of pre-cyclone enrollment level in the project location. At project completion, enrollment was 2,196 exceeding the original 2015 baseline target of 1,260 (i.e., 60% of the baseline of 2,100). It also eclipsed the revised 2015 baseline target of 759 students (i.e., 60% of the revised baseline of 1,265). Student enrollments in the four upgraded schools increased by 41% from 451 in 2015 to 634 in 2020.

20. Output 1, which focused on rebuilding and/or upgrading of schools on Tanna Island of Tafea Province was delivered. The revised target of rebuilding or retrofitting at least four schools following build-back-better principles was met, including the provision for community emergency shelters. By August 2020, Kwataparen JSS, Ienaula JSS, Lowiepeng JSS, Imaki JSS on Tanna Island were provided with new buildings that could function as safe shelters as well, while existing buildings were retrofitted with new fixtures and functionalities to enhance resilience. A total of 35 buildings were rehabilitated and 61 new buildings were constructed under the project. The four project-supported schools also provided shelter to 1,086 persons who were

¹⁵ ADB. 2009. *Pacific Approach 2010–2014*. Manila.

¹⁶ The output description was changed from "Tafea Province" to "Tanna Island in Tafea Province".

¹⁷ Due to project implementation delays, the milestone dates for key activities had to be updated.

about 24.3% of the population within a three-kilometer radius surrounding the schools.¹⁸ The PMU at MOET established a robust technical review procedure for quality assurance and gender responsiveness of school buildings and associated facilities. The designs were also used by MOET for the construction of other schools.

21. Output 2, which pertained to strengthening the capacity of communities and MOET management for disaster risk reduction and disaster preparedness was assessed as achieved. A total of 10 workshops were to be undertaken under this project (i.e., two per school). However, with one school being removed from the project scope and two other schools being combined into one, the project was able to target all the required stakeholders even with the six workshops on disaster risk management that were actually undertaken. Specifically, the project workshops on disaster risk management had 51% women participants, exceeding the target of at least 40% women and children participants under the GAP. In addition, four workshops were delivered on sexual and reproductive health and three on hygiene awareness for communities. The second target of at least 20 people (at least three women) from the MOET acquiring skills in technical approaches to disaster risk reduction was exceeded, with 40 MOET staff (37.5% women) participating in two provincial and six community workshops; thus acquiring skills in technical approaches. These workshops helped build local capacity in disaster resilience and complemented the build-back-better approach.

22. The project was classified as category B for environment. Environmental assessment and review framework was prepared to identify and manage the anticipated environmental impacts of reconstruction. The framework considered the environmental risks and guided the review and clearance of initial environmental examination report. The initial environmental examination contained an environmental management plan as part of mitigation measures implemented during the design and preconstruction, construction, and operation phases. In addition, a construction environmental management plan was prepared for each project site. Given the nature and scope of the project with minor potential risks and impacts, these documents provided an adequate basis for the identification of impacts and managed the environmental safeguards risks. There was no involuntary resettlement and indigenous peoples triggered by the project. These were classified as both category C.

23. The GAP was effectively implemented with 100% of planned activities completed, 80% of quantitative targets met,¹⁹ and sex-disaggregated data on beneficiaries were provided.²⁰ The participatory approach to community workshops and consultations, which involved women by at least 40%, contributed significantly to the successful implementation of the GAP. Impacts on the environment were minimal in view of the mitigation measures adopted at project appraisal and the attention to safeguards aspects during construction. This validation views that the outputs led to the attainment of the envisaged outcome and thus assesses the project effective.

C. Efficiency of Resource Use

24. The PCR rated the project efficient. It carried out a cost-effectiveness analysis to measure how well resources were utilized to achieve its outcome. The measures used were

¹⁸ Shelter capacity at the four project-supported JSSs included 648 at Kwataparen, 297 at Ienaula, and 141 at Imaki.

¹⁹ The quantitative target of at least 40% women involved in the development of the disaster management plan was not achieved, with only 30% women participating in the process.

²⁰ Key achievements were 247% increase in girls' enrollment in the four project schools, 50% women's participation in capacity building workshops, 52% in disaster reduction training, 51% in sexual and reproductive health, and 45% in consultations for school reconstruction and design.

(i) net present value (NPV) of cost incurred per student per year and per graduate,²¹ and (ii) NPV of cost per person that can be sheltered during a disaster.²² The NPV of cost per student per year, comprising construction and maintenance at completion, was estimated at \$237, compared to \$279 at appraisal or a decrease of 15%, which indicated cost efficiency. The NPV cost per graduate was \$946 at completion, compared to \$1,114 at appraisal. The NPV cost per person that can be protected from disaster or emergency at completion was estimated at \$3,273 compared to \$4,144 at appraisal, or about 21.0% lower in unit cost.²³ These estimates indicated that resources were efficiently used. This validation finds the assumptions and methodology used by the PCR for estimating efficiency of the project sound and plausible.

25. On the financing sources, the project utilized 98.3% of the \$5 million grant to deliver the expected outcome without cost reallocation. The post disaster and emergency nature of the works prompted the need for a tight delivery timeline in the project design, which called for the completion of recovery work within 24 months. However, the start-up was delayed by about 14 months due to the delayed recruitment of a consulting firm and longer preparation of bidding documents. Thus, the project was extended by 24 months. The extension was suitable given the circumstances underlying the delay in a post-disaster situation. It enabled the project to return on track. Activities were completed within the approved extended period. There were no cost overrun during the extension. Notwithstanding the delays, the available resources were efficiently used to deliver the needed infrastructure and capacity building. In view of the above, this validation assesses the project efficient.

D. Preliminary Assessment of Sustainability

26. The PCR assessed the project likely sustainable. It indicated that the MOET's maintenance policy²⁴ assures the availability of funds for operational maintenance of physical assets through government grants and school's rental income.²⁵ Also, the Education and Training Sector Strategy Plan 2020–2030²⁶ recognizes the importance of quality school infrastructure in supporting student access and thus includes minimum quality standards for maintenance and asset management. The PCR likewise indicated that the operations and maintenance manual developed by the contract is used actively by schools to support the school's asset management plan.²⁷ Furthermore, it noted the strong ownership among key stakeholders, including the MOET, at the central and provincial levels, and the local communities surrounding the project schools. Allocation for maintenance and development expenditure by schools in 2020 substantially increased compared to previous years.²⁸ ADB projection estimates for 2020 to 2025 indicate that schools' financial conditions are likely to improve as government continues to provide support to schools and provide grants for students,²⁹ and as enrollment is projected to increase by 5% per year.³⁰ This validation notes

²¹ The NPV was used as a proxy for cost-effectiveness. Per graduate cost was computed based on a 4-year education (grades 7 to 10).

²² The NPV calculations considered the superior utility benefits of building back better.

²³ The unit cost represents the NPV cost over the 30-year economic life of the project.

²⁴ MOET. 2008. *School Maintenance Policy*. Port Vila.

²⁵ PCR, Appendix 14 (Table A14.1 to Table A14.3)

²⁶ MOET. 2020. *Vanuatu Education and Training Sector Strategy Plan 2020-2030*. Port Vila.

²⁷ Based on testimonies of school administrators (PCR, footnote 41).

²⁸ For example, operations and maintenance in Lowiepeng increased to \$24,640 in 2020 from \$13,288 in 2019.

²⁹ Under the Education Regulation (Amendment) order 107 (2019) the government pays, in the form of grant, for each student enrolled in JSS in each government- and non-government-assisted school per year the following: (i) tuition fee of Vt42,000 and (ii) operational fee of Vt8,125.

³⁰ Appendix 14 of the PCR showed in detail the ADB's projection estimates of the revenue and expenditures of schools supported by the project.

the government's strong ownership for this project. Likewise, it notes that the government's commitment and priority accorded to the education sector ensures that funding for the operation and maintenance of the project facilities would be sustained.

27. In addition, this validation assesses that the design of new school buildings and the emergency shelters can withstand Category-5 cyclones. The structural design and materials used for the project's physical component were of good quality and appropriate for their intended purpose. Thus, the project facilities are less likely to be subjected to rapid wear and tear and obsolescence. This will ease the strain on the operations and maintenance budget in the short to medium term. In terms of institutional sustainability, the training of the MOET provincial staff and communities helps in enhancing disaster-preparedness and resiliency. As a whole, the project's benefits are likely to be sustained over the economic life of the structures, which the project supported. This validation assesses the project likely sustainable.

III. OTHER PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENTS

A. Preliminary Assessment of Development Impact

28. The PCR rated the development impact of the project satisfactory. Enrollments in the four JSSs returned to pre-cyclone levels, and education services resumed with disaster-resilient infrastructure. The civil works provided employment to 200 local laborers who gained knowledge and skills in constructing and retrofitting disaster-resilient buildings. The capacities of adjacent communities were strengthened through trainings in disaster preparedness, water, sanitation, sexual and reproductive health, hygiene, and food security.

29. In addition, this validation notes that the project helped enhanced disaster resilience in the project communities through the active involvement of local communities and the MOET in the design process, capacity building and information campaigns on responding to disasters, safer construction techniques, and setting of standards for school facilities' maintenance. This validation assesses the development impact of the project satisfactory.

B. Performance of the Borrower and Executing Agency

30. The PCR rated the performance of the executing and implementing agencies satisfactory. As envisaged, MOET established a PMU shortly after the grant became effective and facilitated the participation of its provincial staff to strengthen institutional capacity at the local level. The grant covenants were complied with, although there were delays in the submission of reporting requirements (para. 13). The MOET showed strong leadership for this project and actively facilitated community consultations, engaged the DSC in project design preparation, coordinated with the four participating schools during implementation, and supervised civil works and capacity development training. This validation notes that the grievance resolution mechanism facilitated resolution of grievances that were reported. However, there were school administrators and community members that expressed, during the completion review interviews, that their suggestions were not taken into consideration in the final design, which indicated the need for improved communication. Also, the MOET could have done better in the timely submission of reportorial requirements. On the whole, this validation assesses the performance of the executing agency and implementing agency satisfactory.

C. Performance of the Asian Development Bank and Cofinanciers

31. The PCR assessed the performance of the ADB and cofinancier satisfactory. ADB fielded regular missions including a mid-term review to supervise and monitor the progress of

implementation. ADB was prompt in addressing the implementation challenges of the project and was responsive to the requests of the government. Also, ADB promptly approved the competitive bidding process for DSC selection, after the failure of employing the single source selection method. The government's request for a 2-year project extension to offset the start-up delays was approved in a timely manner. Moreover, ADB quickly approved the government's request to reduce the number of JSSs from five to four schools, which enabled the accommodation of additional construction works and better use of grant funds. Stakeholders from government and local communities were satisfied with ADB and the Japan International Cooperation Agency's (JICA) support and partnership. JICA actively participated in project preparation and conferred with government agencies and ADB on the project coordination arrangements. The funding support from the JFPR through JICA enabled ADB to respond quickly to the government's request for emergency assistance in the education sector. This validation assesses the performance of ADB satisfactory.

D. Others

32. There were no governance and fiduciary issues encountered during implementation of the project.

IV. OVERALL ASSESSMENT, LESSONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Overall Assessment and Ratings

33. The PCR rated the project successful with the ratings of relevant, effective, efficient and likely sustainable. This validation assesses the project relevant, efficient, effective, and likely sustainable. The project was responsive to the government's need for emergency assistance and suitable to the requirements for disaster recovery, rehabilitation, and reconstruction of project schools. The project was effective as the envisaged outcome was achieved and most of the output targets were met. It was efficient in utilizing resources to achieve the intended results. The project is likely sustainable in view of the mechanism in place for funding maintenance works, strong ownership among stakeholders, and government's commitment to support the education sector. As a whole, this validation assesses the project successful.

Overall Ratings

Validation criteria	PCR	IED review	Reason for disagreement and/or comments
Relevance	Relevant	Relevant	
Effectiveness	Effective	Effective	
Efficiency	Efficient	Efficient	
Sustainability	Likely sustainable	Likely sustainable	
Overall Assessment	Successful	Successful	
Preliminary assessment of impact	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	
Borrower and executing agency	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	
Performance of ADB	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	
Quality of PCR		Satisfactory	Para. 39

ADB = Asian Development Bank, IED = Independent Evaluation Department, PCR = project completion report.
Source: ADB (IED).

B. Lessons

34. The lessons indicated in the PCR were suitable and useful. Related to the need for strengthening project planning, the PCR noted that infrastructure investments, based on the build-back-better principles and capacity development support, contribute to strengthening disaster resilience at the local level. The project also highlighted the need for a national strategy and operational plan to strengthen disaster resilience of school assets, including a holistic assessment of other school infrastructure needs. Designs prepared for schools can be prototypes for rehabilitating and constructing schools with community emergency shelters throughout the country. In terms of community engagement, extensive community consultations at different levels help ensure that the final design reflects stakeholders' feedback and suggestions. Related to procurement, the use of single source recruitment may not always save time as there is a need to negotiate remuneration rates which can pose significant risk in the timely recruitment of consultants. In terms of monitoring, the outcome and shelter-related output indicator should be specific to the project schools to correlate with the project inputs and overall objectives. The GAP design should include more quantitative targets and require regular monitoring.

35. This validation adds the following project-level lessons. First, the flexibility of project design is vital for post-disaster emergency assistance project. It provides an opportunity for the project teams and executing agencies to make the necessary changes in scope and/or realign project components based on importance and urgent development needs, specifically when a project had limited fund source. An emergency assistance is usually prepared rapidly without sufficient time to adequately assess the full scope of rehabilitation and reconstruction works. Therefore, formulating a flexible design during project preparation phase helps ensure that revisions in the proposed rehabilitation (e.g., project location, components and outputs, financiers) could adequately support the achievement of project outcome. Also, this facilitates timely delivery of project outputs. Rehabilitation of damaged infrastructure could face implementation challenges due to low capacity and weak institutions. For instance, where appropriate and applicable, flexible procurement arrangements and appropriate procurement planning can streamline the lengthy recruitment processes of consultants to allow timely response of urgent rehabilitation works. As a whole, emergency school reconstruction projects that are completed on time ensures education continuity during recovery and post-disaster period.

36. Second, the build-back-better approach to recovery and rehabilitation projects relies on the contributions and engagement of all stakeholders and development partners. Consultations with government and local communities during preparation and design permit a good approach to building a resilient infrastructure project. These help reflect social and cultural aspects of local development in a project design that could foster greater ownership. In addition, development financiers play an important role in bridging the gaps in technical and financial capacities of national and local agencies. Their support in terms of technical know-how can institute a better project design to enhance the resilience of construction and disaster-affected communities to build-back-better. Cooperation among, as well as greater engagement of, development financiers can help implement faster and more inclusive build-back-better-and-stronger projects that enable the government to mitigate the adverse effects of future disasters.

C. Recommendations for Follow-Up

37. The recommendations of the PCR are appropriate. ADB should monitor annual government allocations for operations and maintenance of project schools, as well as the resilience of reconstructed buildings. Also, small-scale projects should have fewer critical

covenants. ADB should explore the feasibility of further strengthening the sector in partnership with other development partners active in the region.

V. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS AND FOLLOW-UP

A. Monitoring and Reporting

38. Monitoring of project implementation and targets specified in the design and monitoring framework was adequate. The PMU oversaw day-to-day implementation and monitored project progress. The GAP design should have included baseline data, which could have further strengthened project management. The MOET could have done better with timely submission of GAP and financial reports.

B. Comments on Project Completion Report Quality

39. The quality of the PCR is satisfactory. It was well written and concise. The ratings were substantiated with evidence. The assumptions and method used for estimating the efficiency of the project were sound and plausible. The appendices were comprehensive and informative. The lessons drawn from the findings were suitable and useful.

C. Data Sources for Validation

40. The sources for this validation were the report and recommendation to the President, the PCR, back-to-office reports, and midterm review mission report.

D. Recommendation for Independent Evaluation Department Follow-Up

41. None.