

Nepal School Sector Program



Improving equitable access to quality education is accorded the highest priority on Nepal's development agenda. Impressive progress has been made in sector performance, especially in access to education. The progress in school education demonstrates the resilience built up through incremental but critical reforms. This resilience stems mainly from the decentralized school system, which is a unique feature and strength of the education system in Nepal.

However, the rapid expansion in access also highlights the need for commensurate improvements in quality, efficiency, and institutional capacity to manage an expanded and inclusive school system. In particular, the school sector faces continuing challenges in providing quality basic education to disadvantaged children in hard-to-reach areas; ensuring a high quality of education; creating an enabling and safe school environment; implementing an effective teacher management and professional development system; and strengthening procurement, financial

management, and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) capacity.

In November 2011, the Asian Development Bank approved the School Sector Program (SSP), a follow-on to the Education Sector Program, subprogram III, which supports the Government of Nepal's 7-year (FY2010–FY2016) School Sector Reform Program (SSRP). The SSRP is supported by ADB and eight other development partners using the sector-wide approach. Building on the achievements of the Education for All Program (2004–2009), the SSRP aims to expand access and equity, improve quality and relevance, and strengthen the institutional capacity of the entire school education system.

ADB's SSP is in line with the strategic directions of ADB's South Asia Department, which focuses on sustainable infrastructure, climate change mitigation and adaptation, human development, regional cooperation and integration, public-private partnerships, and good governance.

Project Features

Stronger focus on gender, social inclusion, and quality. The program focuses on equity and quality, and reinforces efforts to extend quality education to girls and children from vulnerable communities who are deprived as a result of gender and socioeconomic factors. These efforts comprise incentives that target individuals (scholarships and incentives to needy students) and institutions (provision of priority minimum enabling conditions to the most disadvantaged basic education schools).

Strengthened institutional capacity and fiduciary risk management. The capacity of the Ministry of Education (MOE) and the Department of Education (DOE) to implement the program effectively is critical for program success, and requires effective and transparent financial management. The program strengthens institutional capacity with a focus on program management, procurement, financial management, and reporting systems, thereby helping mitigate fiduciary risks.

Greater focus on monitoring and evaluation. Good policy outcomes require policy making based on a robust understanding of what works and why. To achieve desired results and address governance risks, the program focuses on establishing stronger monitoring and

(continued overleaf)

The program supports scholarships and other basic and secondary education incentives annually for more than 3.8 million girls and children from vulnerable communities

Project Features

(continued)

evaluation protocols. The government's education management information system data will be independently validated, particularly in enrollments, textbook and scholarship distribution, and identification of schools for targeted support. This enables evidence-based interventions for high quality and inclusive education.

Innovative support for school safety.

School buildings in Nepal are susceptible to multiple hazards, such as earthquake, landslide, flood and storm, and those arising from climate change. The program supports school safety as an essential component of an enabling environment for student learning, a first for the education sector in Nepal.

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The program targets disadvantaged groups and poverty areas by providing scholarships and education of an acceptable quality.

The Project at a Glance

Cost and financing: \$65.0 million of ADF Grant with \$3.46 million of co-financed grant from the Government of Australia

Project approval date: 22 November 2011

Project themes: Social development, Governance, Gender equity, Capacity development

Status of project implementation: Ongoing

Program closing date: 31 December 2014

Executing agency
Ministry of Education

ADB department
South Asia Department
Nepal Resident Mission
Smita Gyawali
Project Officer
sgyawali@adb.org

Sources: Project information document, <http://www.adb.org/projects/35174-082/main>; ADB. 2011. *Report and Recommendation of the President to the Board of Directors: Proposed Policy-Based Grant and Technical Assistance Grant to Nepal for the School Sector Reform Program*. Manila. <http://www2.adb.org/Documents/RRPs/NEP/35174/35174-082-nep-rrp.pdf>

© Asian Development Bank Publication Stock No. ARM125070-2 October 2012

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