

« FICHE CONTRADICTOIRE »

**Independent Evaluation of EU Budget Support in Cambodia (2011 – 2016)**

<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>Response of EU services</b>	<b>Follow-up (one year later)</b>
<p><b>1) Commit more resources to capacity development.</b></p> <p>Addressing capacity constraints is critical to establishing the necessary conditions for government to adopt, fund and deliver reforms effectively. This will require committing more resources to capacity development relative to the budget support financial flows. Capacity development should be broadly defined, and more innovation may be needed. Direct / more explicit complementarity on capacity development with other development partner-funded projects should be considered in programme design.</p>	<p><b>Accepted</b></p> <p>The ESRP 2018-2021 programme, if compared with its predecessors, already envisaged since its initial design (decision was taken in September 2017) a substantial increase in absolute terms of the funds allocated to capacity building. 9.5 M EUR are in fact allocated for the UNICEF managed Capacity Development Partnership Fund (CDPF), complementary measure of the program.</p> <p>At the same time, a number of changes to the PAF of the EU Cambodia ESRP 2018-2019 have been made through the Addendum n. 1 to the FA in order to respond to this recommendation by enacting even stronger synergies with other DPs funded programmes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Indicator 2.1 on National Learning Assessment: Revised targets proposed builds on the work of the on-going USAID funded support to the Education Quality Assurance Department (EQAD) of the MoEYS in the implementation of National Learning Assessments, in the reporting and analysis of learning assessment data, and in the finalization and implementation of the Learning Assessment Framework;</li> <li>• Indicator 2.2 on School Based Management (SBM) and Teacher Policy Action Plan (TPAP) implementation: the proposed target on SBM for</li> </ul>	

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	<p>tranche 2 synergizes with the GPE III variable tranche result framework recently approved, while the proposed targets related to Tranche 3 and 4 on teachers' professional development build on expected deliverables from GPE III Fixed tranche grant – implementation just started.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Indicator 2.4 (on primary completion): the proposed targets on repetition align with the GPE III variable tranche triggers.</li> <li>• Indicator 2.8: the targets on school financing have been revised factoring in the SIDA planned support over the next 3 years and gradual phase out.</li> </ul> <p>In addition, the EU Del is in the process of negotiating with the MoEYS the inclusion in the ESRP 2018-2021 programme of additional TA support to key areas of the PAF, including the piloting of innovative approaches in terms capacity development, utilizing the unpaid funds under the 1<sup>st</sup> variable tranche of the Budget Support component (4 M EUR), as concluded by the BSSC of 16/11/2018.</p>	
<p><b>2) Select outcome indicators and targets with caution, and look at intermediate outcomes as targets.</b></p> <p>The EU should use outcomes with caution to set targets, particularly when they are lagged indicators that will only show change over a longer period of time, and are dependent on many variables, some of which are outside of MoEYS's control. It is more likely that lead indicators, such as drop-out and repetition, can provide a focus for dialogue over the timeframe of the programme. Even then, target-setting should</p>	<p><b>Accepted</b></p> <p>As a reply to the recommendation, Addendum n.1 to the FA has introduced a selected number of modifications to the ESRP 2018-2021 programme Performance Assessment Framework.</p> <p>Outcome indicators initially included in the PAF refers to learning outcomes and completion rates (for both primary and lower secondary education).  <u>Indicator 2.1 on National Learning Assessment and on</u></p>	

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<p>take into account that not all factors are under MoEYS's control. Outcome targets should not seek year-on-year improvements but should only be considered as end-of-programme targets. Rather, year-on-year, more focus should be given to intermediate outcomes; that is, indicators or targets that demonstrate a change in behaviour / practice which it is expected will lead to the outcomes (e.g. demonstrated change in school management / standards, qualifications of teachers).</p> <p>Outcome targets should also be set with caution. Where there are over-ambitious targets, the EU could consider setting lower targets, which are seen as minimum levels of progress and based on a realistic assessment. While this would be at the cost of alignment between budget support and sector targets, it would support the function of budget support programme targets providing leverage for sector progress better than unachievable targets</p>	<p><u>learning outcomes:</u> The proposed focus on proficiencies rather than on scaled scores, initially envisaged, in measuring learning achievements should help in better capturing what are usually very slow (and often not linear) changes. Assessing the proportion of students attaining 'grade proficiency' is a more practical measure of changes in student performance over time and should reduce (though not eliminate) the potential impact of political pressure in this area. It also allows a more immediate response by the MoEYS by placing a greater focus on ensuring that the academically weaker students are sufficiently supported.</p> <p>In addition the introduction of process oriented (intermediate) targets related to the improvement of learning assessment practices contributes to: 1) Accompanying the MoEYS in the process of further institutionalize relevant learning assessment practices at all levels and more importantly, improving the use of learning assessment as key determinant to improve learning outcomes, and 2) reducing the emphasis on changes in learning assessment that very much depend on past policy decisions and that cannot reflect the current reform efforts.</p> <p><u>Indicator 2.4 Primary Completion Rate:</u></p> <p>The revised PAF proposes to focus on repetition in order to keep the attention on improvements on completion of primary education (SDG 4 priority) while dealing with a variable that is much more responsive to MoEYS policy decisions and at the same time has a strong impact on completion. The strong correlation between repetition</p>	

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	<p>and completion rate at primary level in Cambodia is also presented in the econometric analysis supporting the BS Evaluation.</p> <p><u>Indicator 2.5 Lower Secondary Completion Rate:</u></p> <p>As for primary education, an alternative option has been considered to completion rate for lower secondary education. In this case, Drop-out has been proposed as alternative indicator. The PAF already envisages targets related to the MoEYS scholarship programmes and its gradual expansion and this provides an important link between drop out and the implementation of a key policy to counter it.</p>	
<p><b>3) Increase the focus of future programmes and of PAF</b></p> <p>The MoEYS and the EU should take care not to fragment the PAF. When PAF indicators are spread too thinly over many reform areas, the PAF may not succeed in progressing any one area significantly further, even when all targets are met. Future PAFs should select few areas, and ensure that the mix of indicators will progress those areas.</p>	<p><b>Accepted</b></p> <p>The ESRP 2018-2021 and the related PAF, despite still presenting a very broad scope, already envisaged, since its initial design a clear focus on priority reforms.</p> <p>As a consequence of the recommendation, the changes introduced to the PAF through the Addendum n. 1 to the FA intends to further narrow the focus on the implementation of 2 major reforms (SBM and TPAP). In this perspective, stronger links and synergies across indicators are also proposed to support reforms' implementation from different angles.</p>	
<p><b>4) Consider shifting planned tranche decision and disbursements to the new year, to increase predictability</b></p> <p>The MoEF, MoEYS and EU should consider planning for a tranche decision and disbursement only in the year after the</p>	<p><b>Partially accepted</b></p> <p>While acknowledging the delays in the annual assessment and disbursement of variable tranche payments registered during the years under review, the</p>	

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<p>assessment year, to allow more time for RGoC processes and for resolving queries. This will provide certainty to the MoEF to plan and budget.</p>	<p>EU Delegation consider it is still feasible and realistic to still schedule all BS payments in Q4 of each review year.</p>	
<p><b>5) Consider continuous evaluation</b></p> <p>The EU should consider setting up the basis for evaluations of future programmes at the design stage, including some qualitative and quantitative baseline work and more regular data collection and analysis during implementation phases. This will ensure especially that information collected from respondents is relevant to the evaluation period and assist in interpreting historical documentary evidence, and will allow for appropriate adjustments in a dynamic environment.</p>	<p><b>Accepted</b></p> <p>In terms of qualitative and quantitative baseline work and more regular data collection and analysis during implementation phases: the recommendation is accepted and expectation is there for the additional TA support to key areas of the PAF currently under discussion with the MoEYS and to be funded through the unpaid funds under the 1<sup>st</sup> variable tranche of the Budget Support component (4 M EUR) (see also response to recommendation 1) to serve this purpose too.</p>	
<p><b>65) Develop functional sub-national partnership structures</b></p> <p>The partnership and dialogue structures and processes at the national level are comprehensive and functioning well. While JTWGs are in place in principle at sub-national level, they are not always functional to support strong Annual Operation Plans (AOPs), partnership and coordination of inputs, and effective joint monitoring. As most of the MoEYS RGoC resources are planned and spent at sub-national level, ensuring that partnership and the alignment of government and donor resources are functioning at this level is critical. That most donors are based in Phnom Penh, even if their resources are</p>	<p><b>Accepted</b></p> <p>The EU Delegation agrees on the need to strengthen the JTWG functioning at subnational level and the connections and links with the MoEYS led JTWG at national level.</p> <p>In this perspective the ESRP 2018-2021 complementary measure (CDPF) already envisaged since its initial design, substantial support to the Provincial Offices of Education – PoEs – and the District Offices of Education –DoEs- in a number of relevant areas. Among</p>	

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<p>spent sub-nationally, makes functional sub-national structures a challenge. The MoEYS should look at how to make the provincial Joint Technical Working Groups (JTWGs) function better and link better to donors and national technical sub-working groups. This may involve reviewing the education provincial JTWGs to understand information and access barriers, engaging with donors on how to ensure that they function better, and implementing the recommendations that arise.</p>	<p>the other things, CDPF over the 4 years of implementation will provide technical support to the PoEs in the development of provincial Education Sector Plan (ESP) for the period 2019-2023 and coherent Budget Strategic Plans (BSP) and Annual Operation Plans (AOPs) with the main aim of harmonizing the planning and budgeting practices, improve monitoring of the implementation of main reforms and increase coherence between national and sub-national level.</p> <p>CDPF will also financially support (gradually phasing out) the functioning of the JTWG at central and provincial level. A regular assessment of the effectiveness of the JTWG system at all level is also envisaged.</p> <p>The EU Delegation is complementing the support to Provincial JTWGs with the support provided to the Provincial Education Sector Working Group (P-ESWG) through a grant implemented by the National Education Partnership (NEP). The P-ESWGs bring together at provincial level the CSOs and NGOs (both international and local) active in the education sector. Mirroring the structure at national level, where the ESWG chair (Unicef) co-chairs the JTWG together with the MoEYS, the P-ESWG chair is the co-chair of the P-JTWG together with the PoE.</p> <p>While it is acknowledged that more needs to be done to strengthen the link between central and subnational level, the clear indications about the positive influence of well-functioning P-ESWG on the effectiveness of the JTWG are an encouraging sign.</p>	

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<p><b>7) Focus more on learning outcomes</b></p> <p>In agreeing objectives for future programmes and setting the associated PAFs, the MoEYS and the EU should focus more on learning as an outcome. Improving the quality of teaching and learning is a persistent sector challenge. The evaluation team acknowledges that equitable access also remains a concern, but noted that over the ESPSP and ESRP progress was made in imbedding reforms that will in future contribute to improving equitable access outcomes, e.g. the scholarships and multilingual education. A central issue for the sector is the quality of education, and this should be supported as a priority. The next two recommendations offer ways for the MoEYS and the EU to implement a higher focus on learning outcomes in future programmes.</p> <p><b>**Continue the focus on teacher reforms by supporting TPAP implementation</b></p> <p>Changes in teacher quality and classroom practice will require a comprehensive approach to reform. The Teacher Policy Action Plan (TPAP), which was put in place during the ESRP and was to some extent supported by the programme, represents a critical and strategic approach that should be given priority in future programme support. A next programme should continue the EU's engagement with teacher reforms by selecting appropriate indicators and targets from TPAP implementation</p> <p><b>**Support the use of learning assessment data for system reform and management</b></p> <p>This builds on the ESRP support to institutionalising</p>	<p><b>Accepted</b></p> <p>The focus on the quality of education and especially on the role of teaching and learning is maintained in the ESRP 2018-2021. The recommendation was used to further reflect on how this could be further enhanced. Addendum n.1 to the FA served this purpose by introducing intermediate targets in the revised PAF to follow up reform implementation. The changes to the targets related to indicators 2.1 on learning outcomes and learning assessment, 2,2 (SBM and TPAP), 2,3 (Early Childhood Education) should be seen also in this perspective.</p> <p>The institutionalization of quality oriented reforms started under ESPSP and ESRP will in any case continue.</p> <p>The support to the gradual expansion of the scholarship programme (for both primary and lower secondary), of the multi-lingual education (MLE) initiative, will be continued and complemented by quality oriented actions in support to the gradual transition of community pre-schools to the MoEYS budget – provided quality standards are met - and the implementation of the Inclusive education policy.</p> <p>Technical support in these areas will be provided through the complementary measure CDPF.</p> <p>On TPAP:</p> <p>- Selected TPAP targets are already part of the PAF (mainly indicator 2.2) and the Addendum n° 1 to the FA has introduced more synergies with the GPE fixed part grant, implemented by the MoEYS and UNESCO</p>	

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<p>assessment tests. In future programmes, the EU should consider supporting MoEYS use of learning assessment data for system reform and its use for system management at Provincial Office of Education (POE), District Office of Education (DOE) and school levels. This will require (i) working with the Education Quality Assurance Department on ways to disseminate the information so that it gets used; (ii) building capacity at central level for using the data in system reforms; and (iii) building capacity at provincial, district and school level for using the data to manage the system.</p>	<p>focusing on the implementation of key elements of the teacher capacity development policy (key part of TPAP).</p> <p>On use of learning Assessment data:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the BS component of the ESRP 2018-2021 programme will accompany MoEYS relevant departments (starting from the Education Quality Assurance Department) and education offices at subnational level in the institutionalization process of improved learning assessment practices.</li> </ul> <p>This approach also integrates well with targets presented under other indicators in the PAF: i) the expanding SIF programme (2.8) which includes an expanded set of eligible expenditures at school level including funding to support quality enhancement and remedial support; ii) the emerging SBM approach (2.2), as it is understood that roll-out of the assessment training will be conducted as a module of the wider SBM training.</p> <p>Finally, this approach is consistent with current and envisaged CDPF support.</p>	
<p><b>8) EU support (and donor support overall) needs a stronger school and district focus for delivering reform</b></p> <p>Capacity Development Partnership Fund (CDPF) and other development partner support provides lessons, which need to be built on. It is likely that (i) human resource capacity at district level versus the responsibilities of district offices would need to be reviewed; and (ii) a more comprehensive and potentially radical approach is needed to accelerate change, to strengthen the capacity and role of school directors, the</p>	<p><b>Accepted</b></p> <p>The ESRP 2018-2021 was already designed with the intention to provide a strong support to the transition to School Based Management and to key reforms supporting this process like the revision of the school financing mechanisms through the introduction of the School Improvement Fund (SIF) and the implementation of the D&amp;D reform. Through CDPF extensive capacity building in these areas is envisaged at all levels</p>	

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<p>community / School Support Committee (SSC) engagement beyond fund-raising, and the district ability to monitor and support schools. The EU should support the MoEYS to move towards more merit-based appointments.</p>	<p>(including provinces and districts). As a consequence to the recommendation, the changes to selected PAF targets done through the Addendum n.1 to the FA - related to indicator 2.2 (School Based Management) and 2.8 (School Improvement Funds) – allow for more clarity on the broad scope capacity building implied by SBM should have (e.g. not only school director but also teachers and School Support committees members) and place even more emphasis on the transition to SBM and on the harmonization with the SIF roll out process. The minor changes done for the target related to indicator 2.9 (D&amp;D), tranche 2, intends also to put some pressure on the MoEYS about the need to take a final decision on what functions should be transferred to which subnational level in order for the needed support at district and provincial level to be better defined and tailored.</p>	
<p><b>9) Support learning on alternative approaches to capacity development and institutional development, and support the MoEYS to implement effective approaches</b></p> <p>The EU should work with the MoEYS and other ministries to develop effective approaches to capacity development that go beyond training: identifying early adopters and champions, analysing and understanding institutional resistance, and disseminating emerging good practices of successful reformers</p>	<p><b>Accepted</b></p> <p>The recommendation is in line with the one made by the CDPF I and II impact evaluation recently concluded and was therefore somehow anticipated by the EU.</p> <p>For this reason, CDPF III was already designed (agreement on the description of the action for CDPF was reached at the end of 2017) envisaging a wider set of capacity building approaches, including mentoring, coaching and on the job training.</p> <p>Specifically, coaching will be used for the capacity building activities at provincial and district level.</p>	

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	<p>A number of pilots on alternative capacity development approaches are currently on-going in Cambodia, especially for what concerns the use of mentoring as a component of teacher training programs. This is an area the EU Delegation will follow up closely with the intention to then support the MoEYS in the institutionalization of sustainable and successful practices as part of TPAP.</p>	
<p><b>10) Continue to support AOP and PBB implementation</b></p> <p>The EU is a lead partner on sector governance reforms, particularly PFM reforms. A pivotal area for capacity development is at Provincial Office of Education (POE), District Office of Education (DOE) and school level for budget planning and results-based management. This would be an important area to look at alternative approaches to capacity development and institutional development, to ensure officials, school directors and School Support Committee (SSC) are more able to plan strategically, use their resources optimally, and monitor their results. By continuing to support these areas, the EU would build on existing progress, deepening it. In particular, the MoEYS should consider ways that the EU programme could encourage inter-departmental and inter-level working. The MoEYS should consider ways to strengthen the link between the Budget Strategy Papers – particularly regarding indicators and targets and the actions that will enable delivery of change and how these are incorporated into Annual Operation Plans (AOPs) and budgets – and how cross-departmental working and working across levels are ensured. This will ensure better articulation between national policy priorities and central and provincial budget planning and</p>	<p><b>Accepted</b></p> <p>The ESRP 2018-2021 programme envisages since its initial design a large share of support for capacity development at POE, DOE and school level for budget planning and results-based management (see also response to recommendation 5).</p> <p>The recommendation has been taken into account in the changes brought to the PAF, through the Addendum n.1 to the FA which call for a stronger inter-departmental and inter level working in implementation of reforms that require the participation of a wide set of MoEYS actors at different levels.</p> <p>Finally, additional support in the coordination across DGs and departments of the MoEYS in the implementation of key reforms is expected to be provided through the additional TA support to key areas of the PAF currently under discussion with the MoEYS and to be funded through the unpaid funds under the 1<sup>st</sup> variable tranche of the Budget Support component (4 M EUR)</p>	

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