

# Internal Ex-Post Evaluation for Technical Cooperation Project

conducted by Nepal Office/ January, 2014

Country Name	Community-based Alternative Schooling Project (CASP)
Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal	

## I. Project Outline

Background	<p>In Nepal, access to basic education was limited with net enrollment rate of 72.1 % (in 2000). The government implemented the Alternative Schooling Programs (ASP) for out-of school children aged 6-14. However, many children remained with no access to education due to financial, physical, and social constraints, since systematic support for promotion of ASP has not been developed by involving various stakeholders: the Non Formal Education Center (NFEC) of Ministry of Education (MOE), District Education Office (DEO), the implementers of ASP, as well as parents and the community.</p>										
Objectives of the Project	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Overall Goal: The model developed by the Project is adopted in other areas of Nepal.</li> <li>Project Purpose: An operational model of the community-based alternative schooling programme is developed.</li> <li>Assumed steps for achieving the project goals<sup>1</sup>: The project implements pilot activities (community mobilization, improvement of schooling, networking stakeholders, etc.) for improving ASP classes (i.e. classes under School Outreach Program (SOP) and Flexible Schooling Program (FSP)<sup>2</sup>) in the pilot areas, and develops an ASP operational model in a form of the ASP Guideline for adoption by other areas of Nepal.</li> </ol>										
Activities of the project	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project site: Districts of Dhading, Siraha and Kathmandu (pilot areas were selected from these districts)</li> <li>Main activities: Analysing current ASP, developing strategies for improvement, implementing pilot activities to improve ASP classes, facilitating mother school (i.e. nearby formal school) - based monitoring of ASP classes, and establishing public relations by organizing workshops among relevant organizations.</li> <li>Inputs (to carry out above activities)  <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;">Japanese Side</td> <td style="width: 50%;">Nepal Side</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1) Experts: 10 persons</td> <td>1) Staff allocated: 100 persons</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2) Trainees received: 13 persons</td> <td>2) Land and facilities: project office</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3) Equipment: Vehicles, audio and visual equipment, etc.</td> <td>3) Local cost: ordinary budget for operating ASP classes</td> </tr> </table> </li> </ol>			Japanese Side	Nepal Side	1) Experts: 10 persons	1) Staff allocated: 100 persons	2) Trainees received: 13 persons	2) Land and facilities: project office	3) Equipment: Vehicles, audio and visual equipment, etc.	3) Local cost: ordinary budget for operating ASP classes
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Project Period	January 2004 to October 2009	Project Cost	522 million yen								
Implementing Agency	Non Formal Education Center (NFEC), Ministry of Education (MOE)										
Cooperation Agency in Japan	IC Net Limited										
Related Projects (if any)	Other donors' cooperation: UNESCO, UNDP, World Education, Save the Children implemented projects related to ASP.										

## II. Result of the Evaluation

1 Relevance
<p>This project has been highly relevant to Nepal's development policy "promotion and expansion of ASP" as set in policy documents including the Education for All (2004-2009), the School Sector Reform Plan (2009-2015), development needs "access to primary education by disadvantaged groups", as well as Japan's ODA policy; JICA's Country Assistance Program (2003) and related policy dialogues between Nepal and Japan, at the time of both ex-ante evaluation and project completion. Therefore, relevance of this project is high.</p>
2 Effectiveness/Impact
<p>Under this project, ASP classes such as SOP and FSP in the pilot areas<sup>3</sup> were supported by means of various community-based approaches that then constituted the "CASP model" (see the Box below). Positive changes were observed such as the improvement of the quality of ASP classes, setting-up of separate sections for ASP in NFEC and DEOs,</p>

<sup>1</sup> Reviewed at the time of the ex-post evaluation.

<sup>2</sup> The Nepal's ASP consisted of the following programs: (i) Out of School Program (OPS): literacy classes targeted to children aged 8-14, which was later replaced by the Program for School Dropout Children (PSDC); (ii) School Outreach Program (SOP) targeted children aged 6-8 years who live in areas with no schools (the program aims to transfer children to 4th grade of formal education after completion of SOP for three years; and (iii) Flexible Schooling Program (FSP) targeted children aged 8-14 years (the program aims to provide primary school level education equivalent to formal education).

<sup>3</sup> The pilot activities of this project supported 13 SOPs and 13 FSPs in the 3 pilot districts (1 SOP or FSP at each ASP center), and a total 702 children aged 6-14 (344 males and 358 females) attended those SOPs and FSPs.

encouragement of parents to send their children to school, and increased involvement of parents in schools and school management committees. Those experiences were compiled in the ASP Guideline, which was finalized by NFEC after project completion (i.e. the indicator for the project purpose was achieved) and distributed to all 75 districts in Nepal.

As to the overall goal, although NFEC started extending approaches of the CASP model to other districts even during the project implementation, the number of ASP centers that have adopted those approaches after the project completion (i.e. the indicator for the overall goal) was not available due to lack of systematic monitoring and analysis. Also, it was found that the Nepali side did not have a common understanding of the “CASP model”, and “adoption of the model”. In the pilot districts, part of the approaches of the CASP model has been extended to newly-started FSPs (5 FSPs in Dhading, 15 FSPs in Siraha and 30 FSPs in Kathmandu). Also, School Supporters (SS) and Resource Persons (RP) have continued monitoring to some extent. However, according to NFEC/DEOs, the quality of such activities was much lower than the project implementation period because there were not sufficient input (budget and human resource) by the Government of Nepal, community participation and regular follow-ups and monitoring supports after the project completion.

With the support by this project, SOP and FSP increased children’s access to education, but the performance did not fully reach the expected level in some pilot areas. For example, although most students who attended SOP completed the three-year program, enrollment rate of children after SOP in the desired grade (Class 4) of formal school was 57% in Dhading, 100% in Siraha, and 66% in Kathmandu as against the project target of 65% by the end of the project. After project completion, the rate dropped to 53% (i.e. 53 out of 100 students under 5 SOPs) in Dhading (2011/12<sup>4</sup>), for some students did not pass the exam for admission. In Siraha and Kathmandu, there were no SOPs after the project completion, and in Dhading, all of the 5 SOPs were transformed to formal schools due to decisions by the central government. As to FSP, the percentage of children who completed the entire program was 68% in Dhading, 83% in Siraha, and 35% in Kathmandu, as against the project target of 75% by the end of the project, depending on several factors including poverty, working environment and caste. The data after project completion was only available about 3 FSPs in Siraha, but the rate improved to 100% in 2011/2012 – all of the 60 students completed the program. The relatively better performance in Siraha is considered to be due to a high demand for ASP (therefore more involvement in the activities) in that district (net enrolment rates in primary education (91.9% in 2011) is lower than the other 2 pilot districts (97.4% in Dhading and 97.2% in Kathmandu)).

In this way, this project achieved the project purpose, and a certain extent of positive outcomes was observed in the pilot areas after project completion, while the achievement of the overall goal was not confirmed. Therefore, effectiveness/ impact of the project is fair.

Achievement of project purpose and overall goal

Aim	Indicators	Results
(Project Purpose) Development of an operational model of the community-based ASP	Operational Guideline for ASP based on the pilot activities is developed at the initiative of counterparts	(Project Completion) Finalization of the Guideline was on-going. (Ex-post Evaluation) Achieved. NFEC finalized the ASP Guideline in 2009 and adopted it in 2010. Copies were distributed to all districts.
(Overall goal) Adoption of the model developed by the project in other areas of Nepal <sup>(Note)</sup>	1,000 existing ASP centers adopt the CASP model by DEO/NFEC in 2-3 years after project completion	(Ex-post Evaluation) The number is not available.

Sources : Project Completion Report, Interviews with DEOs Dhading, Siraha and Kathmandu.

Note: There is no clear definition of “the CASP model” or “adopt”. In this evaluation, it was interpreted that “the model was adopted” if any approaches/activities in the model (see the Box below) is applied.

3 Efficiency

While the inputs were mostly appropriate for producing the outputs of the project and the project period was within the plan (ratio against the plan: 100%), the project cost was slightly higher than the plan (ratio against the plan: 116%) because of regular price hike as a major reason. Therefore, efficiency of this project is fair.

4 Sustainability

In the policy aspect, this project is still given importance in the current development policy, for the School Sector Reform Plan (2009-2015) clearly mentions the expansion of alternative programs to cater for the diverse needs. Based on it, the Annual Strategic Implementation Plan/ Annual Work Plan & Budget (ASIP/AWPB) for 2013-14 mentions ASP as one of its strategic priorities. The plan mentions a need for development of “appropriate models of schooling”, in which the CASP model could be institutionalized more systematically. Institutionally, the ASP Guideline has been finalized by NFEC, and the distinct organizational sections to look after ASP activities have been set up at both central (NFEC) and district (DEO) levels, while the number of staff is insufficient. A positive factor is that proactive involvement of the Department of Education (DOE) of MOE in ASP and other measures for out of school children is being arranged to implement ASIP/AWPB. Also, reinforcement of monitoring of ASP activities by SS and RP is under consideration to strengthen coordination between ASP centers and mother schools. As for the technical aspect, although NFEC has confidence in delivering the CASP extension activities, there are concerns on the technical capacity at the DEO level due to no opportunity of training in the CASP approaches in particular and frequent staff transfer. Meanwhile, capacity development necessary for pursuing the strategies for out of school children are being considered by DOE and NEFC, and training for SS and RP is ongoing. On the financial aspect, certain budget, though not sufficient, was allocated to implementation of SOP and FSP after project completion (see “2 Effectiveness”). Also, budget for

<sup>4</sup> Nepali fiscal year from mid of July to end mid of July.

ASP is expressly allocated in AWPB 2013-14 (consisting of the governmental budget and donor funding).

From these findings, it is considered that the project has problems in, institutional, technical and financial aspects of the implementing agency; therefore, sustainability of the project is fair.

### 5 Summary of the Evaluation

This project has achieved the project purpose of developing an operational model of the community-based ASP. The pilot ASP activities brought some positive changes among attitudes of parents and children's access to education, though not to the expected level in some project areas. Such experiences ("the CASP model") were compiled to the ASP Guideline and distributed to all districts. For the overall goal, the number of districts that newly applied the model was not available. As for sustainability, there are some issues in terms of institutional, technical and financial aspects due to insufficient number of staff capable of extending the model and insufficient budget allocation to the model extension. For efficiency, the project cost slightly exceeded the plan.

In the light of above, this project is evaluated to be partially satisfactory.

### III. Recommendations & Lessons Learned

Recommendations for Implementing agency:

- It is advised that MOE review and utilize the CASP model and related documents in pursuit of the priority strategy of developing alternative models for ASP in the framework of SSRP.

Lessons learned for JICA

- While the importance of ASP activities is well recognized among counterparts, solid strategies to maintain the ASP activities were not observed after project completion (though it has been taken up recently). Therefore, in order to strengthen the project sustainability, a lesson can be drawn that measures for sustaining activities or model even after the completion, such as reflection of the output in policy/sector document, should be carefully elaborated at the stage of project planning and be reminded to the counterpart agency after project completion.
- The clarification on "the CASP model" was found to be an issue. In addition, the meaning of "adoption" of the CASP model is not yet clear among the ex-counterparts either. In designing a project, the terms "model" or "adoption of the model" need to be clearly defined and making a consensus among stakeholders.

#### Box: Components of the CASP model

Through the pilot activities, the following approaches were found as effective, and included in the ASP Guideline:

- ◇ Needs assessment with Village Development Committee (VDC) level stakeholders
- ◇ Mass communication and education campaigns
- ◇ Provision of facility support
- ◇ Educational Volunteer (EV) provision from Community
- ◇ Strengthening Class Management Committee (CMC)
- ◇ Door-to door home visit and individual consultation
- ◇ Mother school support (monitoring by nearby formal school)
- ◇ Additional training for facilitators
- ◇ Distribution of stationary/school uniform
- ◇ Formation and mobilization of the children's club
- ◇ Interactive program between ASP children and students of mother school
- ◇ Provision of incentives and awards for ASP children



One of ASP classes supported by the project. Positive changes which were compiled in the ASP Guideline were observed.