

Summary of Terminal Evaluation

I. Outline of the Project	
Country : Lao People's Democratic Republic	Project title : Project for Supporting Community Initiative for Education Development (Phase 2)
Sector : Education-Basic Education	Cooperation Scheme : Technical Cooperation Project
Department in Charge : Basic Education Team 1, Basic Education Group, Human Development Department	Cooperation Amount (At the time of evaluation) : Approximately 348,059K yen
Cooperation Duration : September 2012– August 2016	Counterpart organizations : Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES)
	Relevant Japanese organizations : N/A
	Relevant assistances : N/A
<p>1-1 Background and Outline of the Project</p> <p>The Government of Lao P.D.R is striving for improving primary education. While Net Enrolment Rate has risen to 92.7% (2010), only 71.1% of students complete the full 5 years of primary education due to high repetition and dropout. The Project for Supporting Community Initiatives for Primary Education Development in the Southern Provinces (CIED I: 2007-2011) supported the target schools/districts/provinces to improve access to and quality of primary education based on School Development Plan (SDP) formulated by the communities themselves. CIED I has shown effective SDP planning and implementation cycle (SDP cycle) starting from participatory planning, implementation, then to review of SDP, and proved as an effective method for promoting better access to and quality of schools. Over the Project period, improvement in access and quality were confirmed at the target schools. However, the educational indicators in southern provinces, such as dropout and repetition rates, are still much worse than those in the national average. Therefore, necessary countermeasures need to be continuously taken for achieving the MDG's indicators related to education in the area. For improving the access and quality of education at the target area as a whole, local administrative organizations, such as Provincial Education and Sports Service (PESS) and District Education and Sports Bureau (DESB), need to promote SDP cycle at school level beyond the target districts of CIED I project. Furthermore, increasing the schools that meet quality standard is a key for district to achieve access and quality indicators of primary education. With such backgrounds, the Project for Supporting Community Initiative for Education Development (Phase 2) (CIED II) came to focus on further strengthening of the capacity of educational administrative organizations, both at central and local levels, for improving the access and quality of primary education by promoting SDP cycle by utilizing the outcome of CIED project.</p> <p>1-2 Contents of Cooperation</p> <p>(1) Overall Goal: Access and quality of primary education in the target provinces are improved.</p>	

<p>(2) Project Purpose: Access and quality of primary education in the target districts are improved.</p> <p>(3) Outputs :</p> <p>Output 1: Capacity of Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) for planning and implementing training toward achieving Education Quality Standard (EQS) is strengthened.</p> <p>Output 2: Appropriate measures based on situation analysis for achieving EQS are considered, implemented and/or proposed by Provincial Education Service (PESS) and District Education Bureau (DESB).</p> <p>Output 3: Capacity of PESS and DESB to support schools for their implementation of School Development Plan (SDP) is strengthened.</p> <p>(4) Inputs</p> <p>Japanese side</p> <p>Equipment: US\$109,603</p> <p>Long-term Expert 2 Short-term Expert: 5</p> <p>Trainees received: 14 Local Cost: US\$417,255.68</p> <p>Lao side</p> <p>Counterpart: 57 (cumulative total at organizations at MoES) 43 (cumulative total at PESS/DESB)</p> <p>Office space for Project</p> <p>Cost for training, monitoring, materials and equipment</p>	
II. Evaluation Team	
Members of Evaluation Team	<p>1. Mr. Sinichiro Tanaka Senior Advisor (Education), JICA</p> <p>2. Mr. Takuya Hakoda Deputy Director, Basic Education Team 1, Basic Education Group, Human Development Department, JICA</p> <p>3. Ms. Erika Tanaka Senior Researcher, Global Link Management, Inc.</p> <p>4. Mr. Kaygnasone NAVAMANE Deputy Director, IFEAD</p> <p>5. Mr. Sithat OUTHAYTHANY Head of Primary Division, DPPE</p> <p>6. Mr. Sithong SIKHAO Head of Planning Division, DP</p> <p>7. Mr. Khonesavanh KOUNLABOTH Technical staff, Primary Division, DPPE</p>
Period of Evaluation	<p>24 January 2016 – 14 February 2016</p> <p>Type of Evaluation : Terminal Evaluation</p>
III. Evaluation	
3-1 Project Performance	
<p>(1) Project purpose</p> <p>Project Purpose: Access and quality of primary education in the target districts are improved.</p> <p>(Indicators)</p> <p>Average figures of the following education indicators of the target districts are improved from the baseline</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Net enrollment rate - Net intake rate - Survival rate 	

- Dropout rate

- Promotion rate

(Achievement) Achieved

The target level of Indicators is not specified in PDM. However, the indicators of NER (Net Enrollment Rate), NIR (Net Intake Rate), promotion rate, repetition rate and survival rate have been improving.

(2) Output

Output 1: Capacity of Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) for planning and implementing training toward achieving Education Quality Standard (EQS) is strengthened.

(Indicator)

1-1 Revised training module(s) for achieving EQS is/are adopted by MoES as national standard.

1-2 In order to ensure the project outcomes to be sustainable, an official document is issued by MoES to clarify roles and responsibilities of relevant departments/institutes including budget lines.

1-3 80 % of PESS and DESB trainers who participated in TOT achieved the test scores (50% of total scores or above).

(Achievement)

1-1 Almost achieved

All three training modules (School Management, VEDC (Village Education Development Committee), Teaching and Learning) have been revised, incorporating the change from School of Quality (SoQ) to EQS and the introduction of SBG. Further revisions are still necessary for some modules. These revision works will be completed in June 2016.

1-2 Achieved

Two decrees were issued. The decree to appoint master trainers was issued as No. 0144/IFEAD dated 11.Jan, 2016 and the decree to approve SBM guideline was issued as No. 1345/IFEAD dated 08 Dec, 2015.

1-3 Achieved

According to the results of the pre-and post-tests during the TOT of School Management for PESS/DESB trainers in January 2013, the percentage of PESS and DESB trainers who achieved the test scores of 50% or above is 82%.

Output 2: Appropriate measures based on situation analysis for achieving EQS are considered, implemented and/or proposed by Provincial Education Service (PESS) and District Education Bureau (DESB).

(Indicator)

2-1 Number of activities supporting lower performing schools in the District Education Development Plan of the target districts are increased compared with numbers before the commencement of the project.

2-2 Average score(s) of EQS components based on EQS assessment and monitoring format to be developed in the activity1-4 in all the target districts is/are increased compared with average score(s) before the commencement of the project.

(Achievement)

2-1 Achieved

Several activities were newly introduced to support lower-performing schools in the district education development plan in the target districts. In general, each district introduced three new activities and implements them based on their own planning.

2-2 To be achieved

The average of EQS scores of six dimensions of all primary schools in target districts have been increased in most of districts. In Lakhonpheng and Khongxedon, both in Salavan Province, the average score of EQS at the end-line survey is lower than that of the baseline survey. In the end-line survey, out of ten districts, seven districts recorded the score in learning and teaching (dimension 2) lower than that of baseline survey. It may be possible that they realized the meaning of learning and teaching after the training/workshop during the Project and, consequently, gave a low mark in learning and teaching by self-assessment, conducted at most schools, at the end-line survey. In the end-line survey, it is found out that schools that participated in both VEDC training and teacher training increased EQS scores.

Output 3: Capacity of PESS and DESB to support schools for their implementation of School Development Plan (SDP) is strengthened.

(Indicator)

Score(s) of EQS components in lower performing schools are increased compared with score(s) before the commencement of the project.

(Achievement) Achieved

In the end-line survey, the data of EQS scores were collected for 100 lower-performing schools extracted by random sampling out of 333 lower performing schools. The average EQS scores of sampled 100 lower performing schools are significantly improved in all 10 districts. The difference of EQS scores between average schools and lower performing schools is diminished at the end-line survey as compared to that of the baseline survey. This shows that the support focused on lower performing schools have achieved benefit in improving EQS scores.

(3) Overall Goal

Overall Goal: Access and quality of primary education in the target provinces are improved.

(Indicator)

Education indicators in the target provinces reach ESDP (Education Sector Development Plan) targets consistent with MoES projections

(Achievement) Likely to be partially achieved

The indicators of NER and NIR are achieved as expected in most provinces. The indicators regarding quality, i.e., promotion rate, repetition rate, and survival rate, are not achieved in some provinces. It should be pointed out that the average provincial indicators are lower than those in target districts in most cases. In Champasack Province, most indicators have been achieved in most districts except for Soukhouma as well as at provincial level, while in Sekong and Salavan Provinces, the target level of indicators have not been achieved both in target districts and at provincial level, except NIR and NER.

One factor to explain this may be the economic situation. In Sekong and Salavan, the level of poverty is said to be more serious than Champasack Province.

3-2 Summary of Evaluation Results

(1) Relevance

Relevance of the Project is high.

- In Lao P.D.R, primary education is still a priority sector. The education development plan of Lao P.D.R, "Education and Sports Sector Development Plan (ESDP) 2016-2020" states that high dropout and repetition rates especially in Grade 1 are serious issues. ESDP also describes that School-Based Management (SBM) is a key to improve primary education. To promote SBM, the needs for capacity development of VEDC and teachers, including principal, are high. Also there are still some lower performing schools that especially need adequate support.
- The target districts of the Project were carefully selected among four provinces in southern area, with consideration to education indicators and geographical coverage by cooperation by CIED I and programs of other development partners. In ESDP it is expected that schools have physical and human resources to equitably improve student learning outcomes (Outcome 4) through introduction of school-based management.
- The Project also aims to contributing to one of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), that is, to ensure inclusive and quality education for all (Goal 4).
- In Japanese ODA policy toward Lao P.D.R, there are four priority areas and one of them is improvement of education and human resources development. In the rolling plan under this policy, there are two programs in education and human resources development. One is basic education improvement program, and CIED II is included in this program.
- The Project adopts SBM approach. In this approach, emphasis is placed on the management at school level. Through taking major problems and causes from school level into district and provincial education development planning, together with management of district, provincial, and central levels, the Project aims at improving access and quality of primary education. The achievement of EQS and education statistics in target districts shows that this approach has brought benefits.
- The Project was formulated based on the experiences and outcome of CIED I. In CIED II, emphasis is placed on capacity development of provinces and districts in addition to schools to improve primary education through further expansion of the outcome of CIED I in terms of quality and geographical area.

(2) Effectiveness

Effectiveness is high.

- Project Purpose is achieved. According to the end-line survey, indicators of Project Purpose, i.e., NER, NIR, promotion rate, repetition rate and survival rate, have been improving.
- As one factor related to effectiveness, it is observed that accuracy of EQS data may be an issue for those concerned to the Project. First, EQS data are practically based on self-assessment at school

level although it is expected that PESS/DESB conduct EQS assessment in their daily work. Also it is found out during the interview at one school that there is discrepancy between the data collected by the school and those recorded at the district level. It seems that some handling error occurs at some stage in data collection and recording. In addition, the terminal evaluation found that EQS indicators are not ideal to appropriately assess the education situations.

- Logic from Output to Project Purpose is appropriate. There are three components in the project design. The first component is to strengthen the administration at MoES level (Output 1), the second one is to capacity development at provincial and district level (Output 2 & 3), and the third, strengthening of capacity at school level (Output 3). All these components are necessary to improve access and quality of primary education.
- There is not much influence of Important Assumptions.

(3) Efficiency

Efficiency is high.

- The Indicators of Output are achieved or being almost achieved.
- Logic from Input, Activity, to Output is appropriate. Sufficient activities were designed and implemented, and sufficient inputs have been implemented to conduct activities. However, the number of VEDC trained by the Project is not so many. The Project put focus on lower performing schools to maximize the effects with relatively small scale inputs. Though it may not be an activity "in addition to PDM", collaboration with development partners has been actively implemented.
- There is not much influence of Important Assumptions to produce Outputs.
- Inputs are made appropriately to produce outputs.
- The dispatch of Japanese experts is appropriate. All the experts have adequate expertise and are highly committed. In the course of Project progress, to further expand the project outputs, experts on system development and training implementation facilitation support were dispatched in addition to the Experts initially planned. Experts are dispatched on a short-term basis, except coordinator. C/P personnel conducts their tasks on their own during absence of experts in Lao P.D.R. Equipment was adequately supplied in general. Training activities in Lao P.D.R were implemented as planned. The participants in Training in Japan learned education management, monitoring & evaluation, and teaching method, and they utilize the knowledge in their daily work, according to interview. Necessary cost is provided adequately by the Japanese side.
- The Lao C/P has been allocated constantly and appropriately. When personnel reshuffle took place, new person was assigned. Most C/Ps are highly motivated and have adequate expertise. Materials and equipment provided by Lao side were appropriate.

(4) Impact

Impact is medium at the time of the terminal evaluation.

- The target of indicators of Overall Goal is likely to be partially achieved. The indicators of NER and NIR are achieved as expected in most provinces. The indicators regarding quality such as promotion rate, repetition rate, survival rate, are not achieved in some provinces. Some indicators

are not likely to be achieved even in the projection in 2018-2019. It should be pointed out that the average provincial EQS scores are lower than those in target districts in most cases. It may be said that this is because there are certain benefits in target districts through the Project intervention but the benefits have not been expanded at provincial level.

- One important factor to achieve Overall Goal is dissemination of activities to non-target districts with the initiative of PESS. Incorporating dissemination activities in provincial education development plan, including the budget, will promote the process in the future. While the percentage of the school that submit SDP has been increased by 30% point (63% - 93%) in target districts, interview and workshop during the terminal evaluation revealed that there are still some schools that are not able to do so. The status of submission of SDP is even worse in non-target districts in target provinces. Strengthening the development of SDP through DESB in non-target districts with the initiative of PESS will contribute to improvement of EQS in the future. One VEDC interviewed has not participated in VEDC training but they mention that they visit nearby school that receives support from external organization to share experiences. This kind of exchange among communities will promote dissemination of the project benefits.
- The level of performance of non-target areas may be an inhibiting factor. As shown in the results of the end-line survey, the tendency is that education statistics in province are lower than those in target districts. To achieve the Overall Goal at provincial level, it is necessary to improve the situation of non-target districts. Furthermore, improvement of education depends on many external factors as well, for example, poverty level and migration of parents. These external factors may be inhibiting factors.
- The logic from Project Purpose to Overall Goal, namely, district level to provincial level, is adequate in itself. As to the achievement level of indicators, it is probable that the target level of NIR and NER is already achieved at the time of terminal evaluation. However, it seems difficult to achieve the target level of indicators related to quality, i.e., repetition rate, dropout rate, and survival rate, in some districts and provinces, taking into consideration the current status and the projection of 2018-19. The target level of Indicators of Overall Goal was defined in line with the national target, which is totally appropriate. However, it may be reasonable to examine the realistic target level of Overall Goal.
- There is not much influence of Important Assumptions to achieve Overall Goal. Meanwhile, it is reported that other development partners schedule to provide support in the area of EQS/SDP/SBM in the target provinces and districts of CIED II, and it is anticipated that, by 2020, in total of 31 districts across 4 provinces may have received support. As such, it would not be reasonable to recognize that overall goal achievement is made only by CIED II benefit, therefore reconsideration of indicator definition may be necessary (see the discussion in the recommendation section).
- There is clear impact on access of primary education, according to the end-line survey. The indicators of quality have not been achieved in some target districts. However, during the field survey of the terminal evaluation, some commented that more parents send their children to school thanks to encouragement by VEDC and that children are more interested in class after the training for teachers on teaching methodology. This tendency may lead to impact on education quality in

the future. In addition, School Management Module Volume 1 and Teaching and Learning Manual are currently utilized at Teacher Training College and School Management Module Volume 2 is planned to be introduced. Therefore, there will be a positive impact on pre-service teacher training in the future.

- As a result of collaboration among MoES and development partners, SBM Guidelines and Training Modules have been developed and approved by MoES. Also SBM Single Nation-wide plan is being developed among MoES and development partners. In addition, under SBM programs implemented under BEQUAL (Basic Education Quality and Access in Lao P.D.R) and GPE II, master trainers are planned to be trained.
- Some unexpected positive impacts are reported. At MoES, working structure in collaboration among several relevant organizations has been established. As coordination among development partners progresses, terminologies on SBM and related matters are in the process of unification among development partners.
- There is a concern that introduction of SBM activities may lead to more workload for community, however, there is no report on this at the moment, according one official interviewed. As to this issue, if it happens, close communication among community people and school, together with DESB officials when necessary, will mitigate negative impacts.

(5) Sustainability

Sustainability is expected to some extent.

- It is likely that policy support will continue. The current ESDP, which emphasizes the importance of SBM and teacher training among others, covers the period up to 2020. Also GPE II covers the period up to 2019.
- In organizational aspect, C/P organizations are planning to continue to implement activities introduced by the Project. In Thateng District in Sekong Province, which was target district in CIED I and is not included in CIED II target, DESB is continuously implement training with their own initiative and budget. To continue activities, it is necessary to incorporate the activities in their development plan together with budget.
- The financial foundations of MoES are not very strong. The budget of their own is not always sufficient. However, during the period of GPE II, it is expected that MoES is provided with sufficient budget to promote SBM. Most of VEDC do not have sufficient budget at the moment to implement their planned activities to improve schools, for example, constructing pre-school class. However, it is possible to implement their activities more effectively through improvement of planning capacity and efficient utilization of available resources.
- SBM is supported by GPE II up to 2019. The prospect after GPE II is not very clear at the moment but a majority of development partners are considering continuous support to Lao education sector.
- General election is planned to take place in April-May 2016 and MoES is under the process of large-scale organizational reform. However, there will not be major changes in the working procedure, according to interview.
- In technical aspect, trainers are trained and the management capacity of PESS and DESB officials

is improving. School principals and teachers improved their capacity in management and/or teaching through training/workshop during the Project. Interview and observation during the terminal evaluation revealed some issues, however, for example, it seems that some VEDCs do not have clear understanding on the methodology of formulation of SDP, and their ability to formulate a plan based on data and facts is still weak.

- SBM Training Module is under development in collaboration among MoES and development partners. Utilization of this Module will help utilization of knowledge and techniques acquired through SBM during CIED II.
- One concern is personnel turnover. Staff turnover sometimes takes place at PESS and DESB. Some VEDC have member change quite frequently.

3-3 Factors promoting better sustainability and impact

(1) Factors concerning to Planning

- The Project is focused on support for lower-performing schools that were identified in situation analysis during the annual district education development planning process.

(2) Factors concerning to the Implementation Process

- A majority of trainers had high motivation and capacity.
- With the initiative of VEDC, communities are encouraging parents to send their children. In addition, teachers provide extra class for slow learners. Some district officials, including Pedagogical Advisors, visit schools for monitoring. These efforts contribute to improving education indicators, such as NER, repetition rate, and dropout rate. Some schools and districts incorporate these activities into SDP and/or district education development plan. It will be effective to further strengthen the development of an education plan in a consistent manner from school to district and provincial levels, with improved quality of the plans.
- Several activities of technical assistance. In regard to EQS scores, the tendency is that schools that participated in both VEDC training and teacher training increased EQS scores. Many of those interviewed comment that one-time training is not enough for capacity development and follow-up after training promotes the effect. At school level, internal supervision (internal peer training facilitated by principal) is also effective.
- Good relations between community and school promote improvement of school. Through the field survey, it is considered that the leadership of VEDC is a key for good performance of school. Many point out administration capacity of principal as a promoting factor for school improvement.

3-4 Factors inhibiting better sustainability and impact

(1) Factors concerning to Planning

Nothing special.

(2) Factors concerning to the Implementation Process

- Some officials do not fully understand SBM approach yet. For example, some local officials

implement policy in a "top-down" manner without giving much consideration to community request, according to interview.

- As possible inhibiting factor in the future, there are still only a few master trainers at central level who can conduct training on development of provincial education plan. Furthermore, almost half of total schools in target districts have not received VEDC training. Also it is reported that some trained personnel at PESS and DESB were relocated to other province. During the project period, new personnel are replaced and this does not cause much problem.

3-5 Conclusion

The Project has been implemented smoothly as planned.

Relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency are high. Impact is medium because the achievement of indicators, especially those related to education quality, is slower than expected. As to sustainability, although there is concern in financial aspect, it is expected that relevant stakeholders continue SBM with their own initiative and with support by development partners when necessary.

Although there are some remaining issues in impact on quality of education as well as in sustainability, expected Outputs and Project Purpose achieved, therefore, the Project will be completed as planned.

3-6 Recommendations

(1) Utilization of human resources developed through CIED II

Through CIED II, human resources have been developed at MoES, PESS, and DESB, who can take appropriate responses and support according to different needs and capacity of schools. As these human resources are important assets to promote SBM, Lao government is strongly recommended to utilize them in planning and implementing SBM at the Ministry, provincial, and district levels as well as in training for district, village, and schools. It is also recommended that these human resources take a leading role in GPE II implementation as well.

(2) Further capacity development

While the majority of trained personnel have developed capacity as expected, some still need further capacity development. To further strengthen the implementation of SBM, it is recommended to strengthen capacity of relevant organizations and personnel in the remaining period of the Project as well as after the completion of the Project.

It is necessary that MoES, PESS, and DESB make efforts to continue activities introduced by the Project. It is especially important to develop capacity of provincial and district trainers, including pedagogical advisors, who are engaged in training activities on the ground. It is expected that this capacity building be implemented in collaboration with master trainers and based on the ministerial decree on SBM-guidelines.

It is important to conduct follow-up regularly after training. For example, it is recommendable that district officials and district trainers conduct follow-up and monitoring to schools and VEDC. Internal supervision conducted at school facilitated by principal is also effective.

As staff turnover is reported at provincial, district and village levels, it is effective to establish a system to train personnel who are newly assigned to the organization with the responsibility of respective

organization. In regard to staff turnover, it is recommended that the government further encourage remaining personnel, as well as replaced staff, to continuously implement activities as resource person for training.

In regard to capacity development, focus should be placed on the improvement of quality of education, for example, conducting training for teachers on learning & teaching and encouraging teachers to provide extra class for slow learners.

JICA will continue to provide technical assistance to be coordinated under the JICA Education Policy Advisor as appropriate. Also, if it is necessary, additional short-term experts in monitoring phase will be dispatched under coordination with other development partners.

(3) Provincial and District Education Development Plan

It is essential to further strengthen the development of provincial and district education development plan, through incorporation of data and facts at school presented in SDP. Necessary activities, including those related capacity building above mentioned, should be clearly and regularly incorporated in provincial and district education development plan together with budget.

To consolidate budget sources, it is recommended to secure financial foundations, combining governmental budget and funds by development partner to finance activities related to EQS/SDP/SBM. Possible financial sources by development partner include district grant supported by BEQUAL, GPE II, and UNICEF, as well as funds supported by other development partners..

(4) Monitoring of SBM based on EQS

To promote quality SBM, it is effective to support school in planning and implementing SDP in accordance with EQS. To materialize such support, it is recommendable to formalize school support for SDP planning and implementation as a part of regular tasks of school monitoring by district officials and pedagogical advisors, and to allocate budget to mobilize them in district plan.

(5) Review of EQS

EQS is utilized as an effective tool to assess access and quality of education. It is preferable to improve the utilization of EQS indicators.

In most cases, EQS monitoring is conducted by self-assessment when utilized by schools, therefore, it is necessary to train teachers and district officials on assessment methodology as objective as possible. This should be included in the training for principals and district officials, including pedagogical advisors and in follow-up that district officials provide to school. It is suggested that personnel trained by CIED II at MoES, provincial, and district levels take a leading role in these activities.

The terminal evaluation found that there is still some room to make EQS user-friendly. It is recommendable to improve EQS, utilizing the ideas and experiences of provincial and district officials trained in the Project. It is also necessary to discuss this issue with relevant stakeholders and development partners.

(6) SBM Implementation in the framework of GPE II

It is expected that SBM activities be continued and strengthened by the initiative of Lao relevant organizations, and support by GPE II will help facilitate this process. It is strongly recommended to utilize human resources developed through CIED II so that these trained personnel can continue SBM activities in the framework of GPE II.

GPE II covers the period up to 2019, therefore, it is necessary that MoES starts considering the future plan to continue SBM within the period of GPE II. It is recommendable to formulate a plan, simulating necessary activities and their cost, well before GPE II terminates.

(7) Additional Indicator for Overall Goal

In the current PDM, the target level of Indicators for Overall Goal are defined as five education indicators, that is, NER, NIR, survival rate, dropout rate, and promotion rate. The target level of indicators are set in line with the national target. Three issues can be pointed out for the Indicators of Overall Goal. First, the target level is too ambitious, taking the current status and projection into consideration. Second, these Indicators do not clearly reflect the benefit of CIED II after the completion of the project period. Third, out of 37 districts across the four provinces of CIED II target, 31 districts are planned to be supported by either BEQUAL or GPE II, consequently, it would not be reasonable to recognize that changes in provincial indicators in the future are the consequences of CIED II. Therefore, it is recommended to introduce additional indicator to complement the current ones to assess the impact of CIED II. It is preferable that the additional indicator is something to reflect the activities of CIED II more directly. Suggestions are; the number of SDP presented to DESB as well as number of activities to develop SDP and number of participants in the activities in 10 districts of CIED II target.

3-7 Lessons Learned

(1) Importance of SBM approach

In SBM approach, emphasis is placed on the management at school level, through taking major problems and causes from school level into district and provincial education development planning and management. The achievement of EQS and education statistics in target districts at the end-line survey shows that this approach is effective in producing benefits in access and quality of primary education.

(2) Focus on lower performing schools

In target districts, there is a huge difference among the situations of schools in terms of access, quality and management. In the current Lao education situations, many schools suffer problems such as high repetition and dropout. It is necessary to improve the situation of lower performing schools to improve the education situation as a whole. With this backdrop, the Project has been implementing activities with focus on lower performing schools. According to the end-line survey, the average EQS scores of lower performing schools have been significantly improved and the difference of average EQS scores between lower performing schools and all primary schools has been decreasing. This implies that focusing on lower performing schools is effective and efficient way to produce benefits and improve education situation.

(3) Importance of VEDC training and teacher training

In the end-line survey, the average EQS scores of lower performing schools that participated in VEDC training and teacher training were improved. Considering that all school principals received School Management Training, this means that additional training to teachers and VEDC, who really work on learning-teaching and participating in school development planning, will bring benefit to lower performing schools.

Such practice of identifying disadvantaged schools to provide additional support for the personnel

directly in charge of lesson provision and SDP preparation is effective to bring the schools out of the lower performing group, and is also effective to improve equity. This is in line with the SDG4 (Sustainable Development Goal4) goal that prioritizes both of the learning and equity

(4) Dissemination to non-target area

One VEDC interviewed during the terminal evaluation has not received VEDC training but they visited nearby school to learn methodology of development of SDP. This kind of exchange among communities will be useful to disseminate experiences. Also these exchange activities can be introduced to disseminate experiences of target area to non-target area. It may be recommendable that local administrative body, such as DESB or PESS in the case of this Project, has initiative to promote exchange activities.

(5) Additional dispatch of Japanese experts

In the Project, system development expert was dispatched to support EMIS. This facilitated clear appropriate data collection and analysis, which was an urgent issue to assess the achievement of EQS. The dispatch of these experts was not included in the original plan. Additional dispatch of experts with adequate expertise in line with the needs of the Project is effective.