

Republic of Cameroon

FY2017 Ex-Post Evaluation of Japanese Grant Aid Project

“The 5th Project for Construction of Primary Schools”

External Evaluator: Tomoyuki Sho, IC Net Limited

## **0. Summary**

The objective of this project is to enhance the learning environment for the students in the North West Region by rebuilding temporary and dilapidated classrooms and providing school furniture, thereby contributing to the achievement of the Cameroonian government’s policy goals of reducing disparities across regions and improving the quality of primary education.

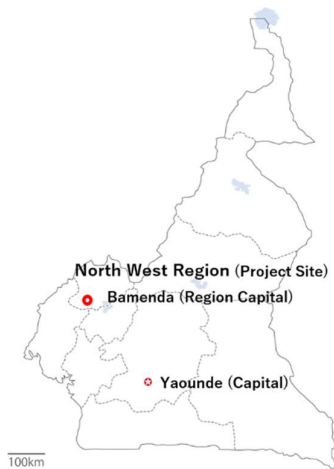
Since the project was consistent with Cameroon’s national development policy, education sector strategy, and development needs at the times of planning and ex-post evaluation, as well as Japan’s aid policy at the time of planning, its relevance is high. The outputs of the project, such as the constructions of classrooms and toilets and the provisions of desks and chairs, were produced as planned. Yet the project period exceeded the plan by one month, whereas the project cost was within budget. Therefore, the efficiency is fair. After completion of the project, the number of usable classrooms and that of students who are able to learn in the fine environment significantly increased. Furthermore, the improved educational environment boosted the students’ academic performance, and the constructions of sanitary toilet facilities also have had positive impacts on the students’ health and hygienic conditions. Thus, the effectiveness and impact of the project are high. As for the operation and maintenance, the “Anglophone Crisis<sup>1</sup>” has negatively affected the number of enrolled students. Consequently, the existing organizational structure, which relies on the Parent-Teacher Association (hereinafter referred to as “PTA”) and PTA levy for the day-to-day maintenance and repairs for the school, has not been functioning well. In addition, some minor problems were observed in the institutional and financial aspects of the executing agency. Therefore, the sustainability of the project is fair.

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

## **1. Project Description**

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<sup>1</sup> In the English-speaking regions including the North West Region, which was the target area of this project, the conflict between the Anglophone (English-speaking) separatists and the government/security forces has gradually intensified since around October 2016, and escalated into the situations where armed clashes, abductions, etc. are causing casualties.



Project Site



Two-story Classroom Buildings Constructed by the Project

### 1. 1. Background

The Government of Cameroon laid out a primary goal of “spreading basic education to all the citizens” in its *Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper* (hereinafter referred to as “PRSP”) (formulated in 2003) and the *Growth and Employment Strategy Document* (Document de Stratégie pour la Croissance et l’Emploi, hereinafter referred to as “DSCE”) (formulated in 2009) and has been aiming to achieve a primary education completion rate of 100% by 2020. Likewise, the *Education Sector Strategic Plan* (hereinafter referred to as “ESSP”) (formulated in 2006) listed “reducing disparities and achieving 100% enrollment and completion rates,” as well as “improving the efficiency and quality of educational services,” as priority issues in primary education. And its Action Plan set targets in terms of the constructions of classrooms and toilets, the provision of desks and chairs, and the renovation of classrooms.

After primary education in Cameroon became free of charge in 2000, however, the construction of facilities could not catch up with a dramatic increase in the number of students. As of 2008/2009, the actual number of classrooms built remained 47,926, as opposed to the government’s target of 67,620 classrooms in public primary schools (target year: 2015), running short of about 20,000 classrooms. Moreover, because 16,381 classrooms, or 34% of the existing classrooms at public elementary schools, were semi-permanent or temporary buildings, there was high demand for rebuilding them as soon as possible. Particularly, in the North West Region, which was the target area of this project, the percentage of the semi-permanent or temporary classrooms among the existing classrooms was about 54%, i.e., more than 20 percentage points higher than the national average of 31%. And the gross enrollment rate was 92%, or 16 percentage points below the national average of 108%<sup>2</sup>.

Since 1997, Japan had continued to support the construction of 1,331 classrooms at 101 sites in 22 cities in nine out of the 10 regions through the 10 phases of the four projects for the construction of primary schools.

<sup>2</sup> Data on the percentage of semi-permanent or temporary classrooms among the existing classrooms and on the gross enrollment rate are for 2009/2010 (Source: MINEDUB Statistics Section, *Statistical Yearbook 2009/10*).

However, no project for the construction of primary schools had yet been carried out in the North West Region. Under these circumstances, the Government of Cameroon requested the Government of Japan for a grant aid project in 2008 that enables the construction of facilities and the procurement of educational furniture in the North West Region.

## 1.2. Project Outline

The objective of this project is to enhance the learning environment for the students in the North West Region by rebuilding temporary and dilapidated classrooms and providing school furniture, thereby contributing to the achievement of the Cameroonian government's policy goals of reducing disparities across regions and improving the quality of primary education.

E/N Grant Limit / Actual Grant Amount	966 million yen / 966 million yen
Exchange of Notes Date / Grant Agreement Date	July 2011 / July 2011
Executing Agency	Ministry of Basic Education, Division of Planning, Projects and Cooperation
Project Completion	May 2014
Main Contractor	—
Main Consultant	Consortium of Matsuda Consultants International Co., Ltd. and Atelier d'Architecture et d'Urbanisme Co., Ltd.
Procurement Agency	Japan International Cooperation System
Basic Design	October 2010–July 2011
Related Projects	<p>Grant Aid Projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project for Construction of Primary Schools (Phase I) (1997)</li> <li>• Project for Construction of Primary Schools (Phase II) (1998)</li> <li>• Project for Construction of Primary Schools (Phase III) (1999)</li> <li>• 2nd Project for Construction of Primary Schools (Phase I) (2001)</li> <li>• 2nd Project for Construction of Primary Schools (Phase II) (2002)</li> <li>• 2nd Project for Construction of Primary Schools (Phase III) (2003)</li> <li>• 3rd Project for Construction of Primary Schools (Phase I) (2005)</li> <li>• 3rd Project for Construction of Primary Schools (Phase II) (2006)</li> <li>• 3rd Project for Construction of Primary Schools (Phase III) (2007)</li> <li>• 4th Project for Construction of Primary School (2009)</li> </ul> <p>Grant Assistance for Grass Roots Projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project for Construction and Equipment of Makari Primary School (2002)</li> <li>• Project for Renovation of Efrain Yasaman Primary School (2004)</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project for Expansion of Joseph Stintzi Secondary School (2005)</li> <li>• Project for Construction and Equipment of Six Classrooms in Tokombéré (2006)</li> <li>• Project for Construction and Equipment of Four Classrooms at Kerawa Public School (2008)</li> <li>• Project for Construction and Equipment of the Center for the Hearing-Impaired in Garoua (2008)</li> <li>• Project for Construction of Five Classrooms in Mbandjock (2009)</li> </ul> <p>Other International Organizations and Aid Organizations, etc.:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• World Bank “Education Reform Support Project” (2005–2012)</li> <li>• Agence Francaise de Developpement (AFD) “Debt Reduction-Development Contract” (including the plan of constructing primary schools in the education development priority area) (2007–2013)</li> <li>• African Development Bank (AfDB) “Education Plan II” (including the construction and rehabilitation of primary school buildings) (2002–2006)</li> <li>• Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) “Construction and Equipment of 48 Primary Schools” (1997–2006)</li> <li>• IsDB “Pilot Project for Improving the Quality of Basic Education” (2009–2012)</li> <li>• United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) “Basic Education Plan” (2008–2012)</li> </ul>
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## 2. Outline of the Evaluation Study

### 2.1. External Evaluator

Tomoyuki Sho, IC Net Limited

### 2.2. Duration of Evaluation Study

This ex-post evaluation study was conducted with the following schedule.

Duration of the Study: November 2017 – December 2018

Duration of the Field Study: February 4 – 28, 2018; June 18 – 26, 2018

### 2.3. Constraints during the Evaluation Study

In the English-speaking regions, which include the project’s target area of the North West Region, and the South West Region, the conflict between Anglophone (English-speaking) separatists and the government/security forces became increasingly intensified since around October 2016 after the protest activities had been initiated by teachers and lawyers against the mainstreaming of the French system. As the security situation deteriorated (“Anglophone Crisis”), a curfew became imposed at the time of the first field study. As a consequence, the evaluator conducted site visits only at eight sites in the three school districts of

Bamenda, Bali, and Tuba out of the 17 sites in the seven school districts<sup>3</sup>. Site visit activities at other eight sites in the three school districts of Santa, Ndrop, and Bafut were carried out by local consultants under the direction of the evaluator. And for one site in the remaining school district of Fundong, a desk review was conducted. In addition, at the time of the second field study, the security situation had further deteriorated, and thus no site visits in the North West Region were made. Instead, follow-up interviews with education officials from the North West Region and additional information gathering, etc. were conducted primarily through a meeting with the delegate of the Regional Delegation of Basic Education (Délégation Régional de l'Education de Base, hereinafter referred to as "DREB"), which took place in Bafoussam in the West Region. Subsequently, the information collected about each site relies heavily on questionnaire surveys sent to each school's head teacher<sup>4</sup>.

Furthermore, as the Anglophone Crisis became widespread, it has become difficult for students to go to school safely. Subsequently, the numbers of students at the target schools of this project have been decreasing and some of the schools have been forced to be temporarily closed. As a result, the extent to which the facilities constructed by this project have been utilized, and such, have changed significantly before and after the outbreak of the crisis. And even at the time of ex-post evaluation, the schools are in a state of flux. Because it is not appropriate to evaluate and make a judgement on the development outcomes of this project solely on the basis of the circumstances surrounding the project sites at the time of ex-post evaluation, this evaluation has made efforts to collect and analyze information/data separately for the pre-crisis and post-crisis periods to a maximum extent possible when assessing the project outcomes. Yet much of the data at the site/school level had been based on self-reported data submitted by each school, and thus there has been a concern that the information may vary significantly in their reliability. Therefore, those provided data were mainly used for the purpose of cross-checking their consistencies with the respondents' answers to the interviews and questionnaire surveys. Citing specific figures is kept to a minimum.

### **3. Results of the Evaluation (Overall Rating: B<sup>5</sup>)**

#### **3. 1. Relevance (Rating: ③<sup>6</sup>)**

##### **3. 1. 1. Consistency with the Development Plan of Cameroon**

At the time of planning, PRSP and DSCE –Cameroon's national development policy documents– listed guaranteeing and universalizing primary education to all students and citizens as a priority goal in the field of education. In addition, the ESSP (target years: 2006–2013) –a strategic document of the education sector–, and its action plan stated that reducing disparities and achieving 100% enrollment and completion rates, as well as improving the efficiency and quality of educational services, as priority objectives in primary education, and developed specific plans on the construction of classrooms and the procurement of desks and chairs. At

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<sup>3</sup> During the site visits, the evaluator had stayed in Bafoussam in the West Region adjacent to the North West Region. The evaluator travelled by road about 78 kilometers to Bamenda, and then conducted site visits from Bamenda while making there as a base.

<sup>4</sup> All the target head teachers, however, had responded to the questionnaire surveys sent to them.

<sup>5</sup> A: Highly satisfactory, B: Satisfactory, C: Partially satisfactory, D: Unsatisfactory

<sup>6</sup> ③: High, ②: Fair, ①: Low

the time of ex-post evaluation, the strategic document (target years: 2013–2020), which was updated in 2013, and its action plan have succeeded to the same policy objectives, although their target figures have been downwardly revised. In light of the above, this project is highly consistent with the development policy and education sector strategy of Cameroon.

### 3. 1. 2. Consistency with the Development Needs of Cameroon

In the North West Region—the target area of this project—the percentage of permanent classrooms in public elementary schools was 46% at the time of planning (2009/10), which was lower than the national average of 69%. In addition, because the English-speaking North West Region has not adopted the double-shift system unlike the French-speaking regions, it has been more likely to run short of the number of classrooms relative to the number of students. Yet, among the 10 regions of Cameroon, no project for the construction of primary schools had yet been implemented in the North West Region through Japan’s grant aid assistance. In the target schools of the project, only 17 classrooms out of the existing 237 classrooms were judged usable continuously at the time of planning. Thus, urgent improvement was needed.

At the time of ex-post evaluation, as the Anglophone Crisis has been intensifying, the separatists who had been appealing the boycott of school education have even resorted to arson of school. And the environment where children can learn safely in school has been under threat. Under these circumstances, the schools constructed by this project (which are locally known as the “Japanese schools”) have become recognized by many parents as the safest schools in the area because of the school yard fences, gates (both built by the Cameroonian side), and robust school buildings<sup>7</sup>. Yet, as the security situation further deteriorates and the likelihood that the crisis continues for long has increased, an increasing number of households have started making their children stay at home, transferring them temporarily to schools in French-speaking regions, or even moving out permanently with all family members. As a consequence, even among the target schools of the project, some have been forced to be occasionally closed as the number of attending students drops. Still, the underlying problem of the shortage of robust classrooms has not changed. Therefore, once the security situation recovers and children come back to school, it is likely that strong needs for the construction of classrooms (especially robust and safe Japanese schools) are going to resurface<sup>8</sup>. In light of the above, this project is consistent with the development needs of Cameroon.

### 3. 1. 3. Consistency with Japan’s ODA Policy

At the time of planning, the *Official Development Assistance Charter* (formulated in 2003) stated that poverty reduction is a key development goal and promised to provide “assistance to such sectors as education, health care and welfare, water and sanitation and agriculture and will support human and social development

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<sup>7</sup> Considering a risk that the school would be closed due to the deterioration of a security situation after the payment of high tuition fees in a private school, an increasing number of parents had had their children transferred from private schools to public “Japanese schools” in the early stages of the crisis.

<sup>8</sup> However, if the crisis continues for long and more and more households are to move to French-speaking regions, it is concerned that it may take a long period of time to return to the normal situation before the crisis.

in the developing countries” to achieve that goal. In addition, the *Yokohama Action Plan* of the 4th Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) (formulated in 2008) declared a focus on the improvement of access to basic education and its quality as a measure to be taken in the subsequent five years and promised to “support construction and rehabilitation of school buildings and related infrastructure.” Moreover, *ODA Country Data Book 2008* clearly stated that top priority in Cameroon is given to primary education. Thus, consistency between the project and Japan’s ODA policy is high.

In light of the above, this project is highly relevant to Cameroon’s development policy and development needs, as well as Japan’s ODA policy. Therefore, its relevance is high.

### 3.2. Efficiency (Rating:②)

#### 3.2.1. Project Outputs

Table 1 shows the actual outputs of this project. Apart from 11 design changes, the outputs have been constructed and procured virtually as planned. Owing to the occurrence of budget surplus, two two-story classroom buildings and two toilet facilities (corresponding to Lot 13–Lot 16 in the Summary of Facilities Constructed of Table 1) and educational furniture were additionally procured in this project. Thus, the output of the project has become higher than originally planned. The remaining design changes other than the additional procurements were relatively minor and have not affected the output and project outcomes substantially. And those changes were done appropriately as adjustments to the situations on the ground or compliances with the local regulations.

Table 1. Actual Construction of Facilities and Procurement of Equipment

Number of Project Sites: 17 sites	
Number of Facilities: 15 two-story classroom buildings, 34 one-story classroom buildings, 24 toilet facilities	
Number of Classrooms: 202 classrooms (of which, three classrooms in two schools were unusable at the time of ex-post evaluation due to arsons)	

Summary of Facilities Constructed			
Lot	No.	Site Name (School Name)	Type of Facility
1	BM-1	GS/GBS* Ngomgham Gr.I, IIA, IIB	2 two-story classroom buildings, 2 toilet facilities
2	BM-2	GS Bamenda GMI Gr.I, IIA, IIB	3 two-story classroom buildings, 1 toilet facility
3	BM-3	GS Mulang Gr.I, II	3 two-story classroom buildings, 2 toilet facilities
4	BM-4	GPS Atuakom Gr.I, II	2 two-story classroom buildings, 1 toilet facility
	BM-5	GS Alamatom	2 one-story classroom buildings, 1 toilet facility
5	BL-1	GS Bali Town Gr.I, II	3 two-story classroom buildings, 2 toilet facilities
	BL-2	GS/GBPS Bali Town	
6	ND-1	GS Bambalang Gr.I, II	5 one-story classroom buildings, 2 toilet facilities
7	ND-2	GS Mbamong Gr.I, II	5 one-story classroom buildings, 2 toilet facilities
8	ST-1	GS Menka	3 one-story classroom buildings, 1 toilet facility
	ST-4	GS Buchi	2 one-story classroom buildings, 1 toilet facility
9	ST-2	GS Santa/GBPS Santa	3 one-story classroom buildings, 1 toilet facility
	ST-3	GS Banjong	2 one-story classroom buildings, 1 toilet facility
10	TB-1	GBS Tubah	2 one-story classroom buildings, 1 toilet facility
	TB-2	GS Mallam	2 one-story classroom buildings, 1 toilet facility

11	BF-1	GS Bujong	2 one-story classroom buildings, 1 toilet facility
	BF-2	GS Agyati	2 one-story classroom buildings, 1 toilet facility
12	FD-1	GS Fundong	4 one-story classroom buildings, 1 toilet facility
13	BM-1	GS/GBS Ngomgham Gr.I, IIA, IIB	1 two-story classroom building
14	BL-1	GS Bali Town Gr.I, II	1 two-story classroom building
	BL-2	GS/GBPS Bali Town	
15	BM-1	GS/GBS Ngomgham Gr.I, IIA, IIB	1 toilet facility
16	BL-1	GS Bali Town Gr.I, II	1 toilet facility
	BL-2	GS/GBPS Bali Town	

Note: GBPS denotes Government Bilingual Primary School, GPS denotes Government Practicing School, and GS denotes Government Primary School.

<b>Equipment (Educational Furniture)</b>
Desk-chairs for students (30 sets per classroom), Desks/chairs for teachers (1 set per classroom), Desks/chairs for head teachers, Chairs for guests (3 chairs per school), Meeting tables (1 table per school), Cleaners' closets (1 closet per classroom), Key boxes (1 box per school)

Sources: Materials provided by JICA, site visits

Overall, the officials of the Ministry of Basic Education (Ministère de l'Éducation de Base, hereinafter referred to as "MINEDUB"), as well as head teachers, teachers, and students, all speak very highly of the qualities of the classroom buildings and toilet facilities constructed and the educational furniture procured by the project. However, there were some cracks on the classroom walls being finished with mortar at GS Mulang and water leakages from the roofs at GS Bamenda GMI. Those occurred after the defect liability period expired, and the Cameroon side made repairs on its own. Moreover, the locks for the cabinets installed in the head teachers' rooms and meeting rooms, as well as the door locks for the head teachers' rooms, meeting rooms, and classrooms, could not stand continuous use and got broken, and have been replaced at a large majority of the schools. Because those locks can be easily damaged by applying force, they have become targets for thieves, and many schools have suffered from thefts and damages to property. A number of the schools have even installed higher quality locks and protective iron door fences outside the doors as a countermeasure. It seems that the locks that are robust for continued use should have been installed from the beginning<sup>9</sup>. Yet, as mentioned, overall satisfaction with the classroom buildings and educational furniture is very high. In light of the above, the outputs have been produced as planned.

### 3.2.2. Project Inputs

#### 3.2.2.1. Project Cost

Because the actual project cost borne by the Cameroon side could not be identified, the project cost has been evaluated only using the cost borne by the Japanese side. And the actual cost turned out to be 98% of the plan and thus within budget (see Table 2). It has also been confirmed that the inputs borne by the Cameroon side, such as the construction of school yard fences and planting on slopes, had been carried out at all the 17 sites and that drawing water into a place had been completed at all the 13 sites where it was technically possible.

<sup>9</sup> Although it is not a quality problem, the design of the windows made of perforated blocks was not very popular because rain, wind, and dust often blow in.



Table 2. Planned and Actual Project Costs

	Plan	Actual	(Unit: million yen) As Percentage of the Plan (%)
Total Project Cost	1,163	--	--
Cost borne by Japanese side	965	945	97.9
Cost borne by Cameroonian side	198	--	--

Source: Materials provided by JICA

### 3. 2. 2. 2. Project Period

As shown in Table 3, when taking into account the increased output due to the additional procurement, the actual project period exceeded the planned period by one month and becomes 103% of the plan. Although the project period had been extended for two months (until April 2014) as a result of the additional procurement, the delivery of furniture had been delayed by one month from the extended period at one site (GS/GBS Ngomgham) where the additional procurement for the provision of furniture took place. In light of the above, the project period exceeded the plan<sup>10</sup>.

Table 3. Planned and Actual Project Periods

Plan		Actual		As Percentage of the Plan
<u>Original Plan</u> July 2011 (start of G/A) – February 2014 (completion)	32 months	July 2011 (start of G/A) – May 2014 (completion)	35 months	109%
<u>After the Extension of the Project Period due to the Additional Procurement</u> July 2011 (start of G/A) – April 2014 (completion)	34 months			103%

Source: Materials provided by JICA

In sum, although the project cost was within the plan, the project period exceeded the plan by one month. Therefore, the efficiency of this project is fair.

### 3. 3. Effectiveness and Impacts<sup>11</sup> (Rating:③)

#### 3. 3. 1. Effectiveness

##### 3. 3. 1. 1. Quantitative Effects (Operation and Effect Indicators)

At the time of planning, the “Number of classrooms that can be used continuously at the target schools” and the “Number of students who can learn in a safe environment at the target schools” were selected as quantitative indicators for the effectiveness of this project. And developing 190 robust classrooms with proper

<sup>10</sup> The Cameroon side highly appreciates smooth technical transfer made under this grant aid assistance project for community development because the Japanese construction consultant well understood the Cameroonian customs and culture.

<sup>11</sup> Sub-rating for Effectiveness is to be made with consideration of Impact.

learning environments at the 17 target sites (29 schools) and improving the school circumstances for 11,400 students had been chosen as the targets of the indicators (see Table 4).

Table 4. Quantitative Indicators for Effectiveness

Indicator	Baseline	Target	Actual	Actual
	2011	2017		2018
	At the time of planning	3 years after project completion	Before arsons due to the crisis	At the time of ex-post evaluation
Number of classrooms that can be used continuously at the target schools	17	207	219	216
Number of students who can learn in a safe environment at the target schools * (persons)	1,020	12,420	13,140	12,960

Sources: The actual numbers are based on the information collected by site visits and the data provided by the target schools.

\*Note: It is calculated by multiplying the number of classrooms that can be used continuously by 60, which is an average classroom size in Cameroon.

With regard to the indicator “Number of classrooms that can be used continuously at target schools, ” 12 classrooms had been additionally procured on top of the initially planned 190 classrooms. Consequently, until classrooms were damaged by arsons at GPS Atouakom in the Bamenda school district and at GS Fundong in the Fundong school district in May 2017 and in August 2017, respectively<sup>12</sup>, the actual number of 219 classrooms compared to the target of 207 classrooms (106% of the plan) had been achieved. At the time of ex-post evaluation, however, two classrooms at GPS Atouakom and one classroom at GS Fundong are unusable<sup>13</sup>. Thus, the actual number becomes 216 classrooms (104% of the plan) (see Photo 1).

With regard to the usage of the classrooms, it has been confirmed by checking the before crisis data that the classrooms constructed by the project had been well utilized except two classrooms at GBPS Bali Town. The primary schools constructed by this project, which have been known as “Japanese schools,” have received high reputation for their well-maintained educational environment. The number of the students who want to enroll in the schools, including those who want to transfer to, tends to increase after completion of the project, particularly in urban areas. Yet, in GS/GBPS Bali Town, two classrooms have been left unused since right after project completion (see Photo 2). Although six classrooms had been constructed in GS/GBPS Bali Town due to the additional procurement, the number of students has not increased even after project completion, due to the suburban/rural location with limited access. Although securing a construction site must have been an important factor to consider, the resolution of classroom shortages and the reduction of classroom sizes would have been accomplished more effectively if the additional procurement had been done at a more conveniently-located site near a center of the school district.

In the Bamenda school district, the numbers of classrooms to be constructed were made smaller than the

<sup>12</sup> The separatists have been calling boycotts of school education, and it is believed that the two Japanese schools had been set on fire as a means of threatening a vast majority of the parents who have refused to obey the appeal, because the Japanese schools symbolize the environment where students can learn most safely.

<sup>13</sup> The classrooms damaged by arson at GPS Atouakom have been being rebuilt by the government and has been almost completed at the time of ex-post evaluation (with a cost of FCFA 21 million). A similar reconstruction has been planned at GS Fundong with secured government funding. Due to growing security concerns, however, it is not certain when the construction can be started.

numbers of classroom shortage at three sites due to restrictions on the areas and shapes of the sites. And to compensate for the shortfall, the number of classrooms to be constructed was made larger than the number of classroom shortage by two classrooms at GS Mulang as there were less restrictions on a construction site. One of its classrooms, however, has been turned into a library as the number of students turned out to be lower than expected, and thus has not been used as originally planned. From the above, it was confirmed that 199 classrooms out of the 202 continuously usable classrooms constructed by this project (99%) had been being used as originally intended before the crisis broke out. If taking into account the classrooms that have been unusable due to arsons, that number would become 196 classrooms (97%).

In Ndop, however, nine classrooms that had been constructed by Plan International (hereinafter referred to as “PI”) have been unused and left abandoned since this project was completed. At the time of planning, the construction of the robust classroom buildings by PI on the same site had already been decided. Nevertheless, the information had not been widely shared in advance among the stakeholders<sup>14</sup>.



Photo 1. A Classroom Damaged by Arson



Photo 2. A Classroom Left Unused

The target number of the indicator “Number of students who can learn in a safe environment at the target schools” has been calculated simply by multiplying the target number of classrooms by the classroom size of the time of planning in Cameroon; that is, 60 students. According to MINEDUB officials, the standard classroom size in Cameroon has remained to be considered as 60 students at the time of ex-post evaluation. Thus, the actual number becomes 12,960 persons compared to the target of 12,420 persons.

At some of the target schools in the school districts of Bamenda and Santa, however, the numbers of the students who want to enroll in had rose after project completion. Subsequently, the number of students per classroom went beyond 100. It had become normal before the crisis that three or four students occupy one bench that is designed for two students. On the other hand, at some of the target schools in suburban/rural areas in the school districts of Bali, Santa, Ndop, Bafut, and Fundong, the numbers of students per classroom ranged from about 30 to 40, and the actual number of students per classroom differed significantly among

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<sup>14</sup> Under ordinary circumstances, the nine classrooms built by PI should be counted as the “number of classrooms that can be used continuously at the target schools.” However, those classrooms have been left unused since the completion of this project and are not in a good condition at the time of ex-post evaluation. Therefore, they are not included in the actual number.

schools.

In light of the above, it is recognized that the number of classrooms that can be used continuously at target schools has increased substantially by this project, and the number of students who can learn in a safe environment at the target schools has also increased.

### 3.3.1.2. Qualitative Effects (Other Effects)

At the time of planning, the followings were listed as qualitative indicators for the effectiveness of this project.

- The construction of the head teacher's offices and meeting rooms equipped with the storage function of teaching materials will enable the adequate storage and use of teaching and administrative documents and thus improve school management capacity.
- The construction of sanitary and gender-separated toilets for boys and girls will contribute to maintaining the health and hygienic conditions of the students and will help improve access to school for girls by developing girl-friendly toilets.
- The construction of school infrastructure with an adequate educational environment is expected to enable more effective classroom teaching.

#### 3.3.1.2.1. Improving School Management Capacity and Making Classroom Teaching More Effective

With regard to the indicators “Improving school management capacity” and “Making classroom teaching more effective,” it was confirmed through face-to-face interviews and questionnaire surveys that securing the safe storage spaces of teaching materials and administrative documents has improved the management capacities of teachers and contributed to more effective classroom teaching. During the site visits, it was observed that carefully-crafted education posters were being posted on classroom walls<sup>15</sup>, which appears to indicate that the teachers have been making sufficient preparations for their classes. From the face-to-face interviews with teachers and group discussions with students, it was also felt that the creation of the bright environment where both teachers and students can more easily concentrate on the class has universally raised the motivation of both of them, not limiting itself to just providing more physical space for storing teaching and other materials. As a result, the students’ performance has improved as demonstrated by the fact that the success rate of the First School Learning Certificate/Certificat d’Études Primaires (hereinafter referred to as

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<sup>15</sup> Face-to-face (qualitative) interview surveys with teachers were conducted at 22 schools in 16 sites of the six school districts except Fundong, using semi-structured questionnaires. The target teachers to be interviewed were selected by the school. The total number of the respondents was 57, of which 42 were females and 15 were males, and by age group, one person was in the 20’s, 17 persons in their 30’s, 30 persons in their 40’s, and 9 persons in their 50’s. (However, the interviews conducted at three schools out of the 22 schools had missing data on the characteristics of the respondents, and thus were not included.) Group discussions with students were carried out at 13 schools in 11 sites of the five school districts except Fundong and Bafut, by a group of 8 to 10 students. The target students to participate were selected by the school with equal numbers of male and female students from the upper primary graders. The total number of the participants was 108, of which 54 were boys and 54 were girls, and by grade, one student was in grade 3, two students in grade 4, 12 students in grade 5, and 93 students in grade 6.

"FSLC/CEP") examination had gone up in many schools. (For the details on the FSLC/CEP success rate, see the "Impacts" section.)



Photo 3. A Class in Session



Photo 4. A Classroom

### 3.3.1.2.2. Maintaining Students' Health and Hygiene Conditions and Improving Access to Education for Girls

With regard to the indicator "Maintaining students' health and hygienic conditions and improving access to education for girls," the health and hygienic conditions of the students have enhanced as a result of the construction of toilets with a sanitary environment. According to the face-to-face interviews and questionnaire surveys, the number of infections reported to school by students has decreased in many schools.

On the other hand, the "gender-separated toilets for boys and girls" have not been enforced in many schools, contrary to what the project intended. Or, in some schools, although the toilets have still been intended to be gender-separated, the rules have not been followed by the students. This is because the number of toilets is limited compared to the number of students, and thus many students tend to use whatever toilet that is available at the moment. It has been suggested by many head teachers, teachers, and students that the toilet facilities should have been structurally divided to make them gender-separated. (The present toilet facilities are not partitioned by walls for boys and girls, with just one common entrance.) Consequently, improving access to education for girls through developing the girl-friendly environment has not been accomplished.

At the target schools, however, the number of girls has generally exceeded the number of boys, and thus access to education for girls has not been recognized as an issue. As shown in Table 5, even in the North West Region as a whole, the number of enrolled students is higher for girls than for boys. Moreover, the FSLC/CEP success rate by gender in the North West Region is consistently higher for girls than for boys<sup>16</sup>.

<sup>16</sup> For example, the success rates were 85.0% for boys and 89.1% for girls in 2013, 88.2% for boys and 90.5% for girls in 2014, 86.1% for boys and 88.4% for girls in 2015, and 88.7% for boys and 91.0% for girls in 2016.

Table 5. Number (Percentage) of Enrolled Students in Primary Schools by Gender in the North West Region

	Boys	Girls	Total
Public School	55,931 (49.8%)	56,354 (50.2%)	112,285 (100%)
Total	69,730 (49.6%)	70,945 (50.4%)	140,675 (100%)

Source: North West Region DREB, *Regional Statistics Summary for Primary Education in the North West for the 2017/2018 Academic Year*

### 3.3.2. Impacts

#### 3.3.2.1. Intended Impacts

In this project, Cameroon's policy goals of reducing regional disparities and improving quality in primary education have been listed as its overall goals. Yet, no specific qualitative indicators for impacts have been selected. To measure the extent to which the impact of the project has been accomplished, this evaluation has adopted the shares of permanent/semi-permanent/temporary classrooms as an additional indicator in terms of reducing regional disparities, and compared data before and after the project to infer to what extent the project outcomes have been achieved. In terms of improving quality, this study has examined the trends of the FSLC/CEP success rate at the school district level.

##### 3.3.2.1.1. Improving the Share of Permanent Classrooms in the North West Region

The share of permanent classrooms in primary schools in the North West Region improved about 9.5 percentage points from 2009/10 to 2016/17 (see Table 6). This project is estimated to have contributed to an improvement of about four percentage points. Because the trend in the national average during the same period is unknown (national average was 69% in 2009/10), whether the regional disparities have narrowed or not cannot be confirmed. Nevertheless, it is certain that the disparities on the shares of permanent/semi-permanent/temporary classrooms between the North West Region and the national average would have been wider without the implementation of this project.

Table 6. Number (Percentage) of Permanent/Semi-permanent/Temporary Classrooms in Primary Schools in the North West Region

	2009/10	2016/17
Permanent	2,183 (46.1%)	2,675 (55.6%)
Semi-permanent	1,699 (35.9%)	1,445 (30.0%)
Temporary	849 (17.9%)	693 (14.4%)
Total	4,731 (100%)	4,813 (100%)

Sources: MINEDUB Statistics Section, *Statistical Yearbook 2009/10*; North West Region DREB, *Regional Statistics Summary for Primary Education in the North West for the 2017/2018 Academic Year*

### 3. 3. 2. 1. 2. Improving the Success Rates of the First School Learning Certificate/Certificat d'Études Primaires (FSLC/CEP) at the Target Schools

As mentioned above, according to the interviews with head teachers and teachers, as well as group discussions with students, the completion of superb educational facilities have enhanced the motivation of the teachers and students alike and created the environment where they can concentrate on classroom learning. Consequently, the students' performances have gone up and the FSLC/CEP success rate has risen in many schools. Table 7 shows that the average FSLC/CEP success rate of the target schools at the school district level, weighted by the number of students in each school. The average success rate of all the target schools had increased from 76% in 2013/14 to 87% in 2016/17. Over the same period, the success rate for the North West Region as a whole increased only modestly from 87% to 90%<sup>17</sup>. Although various factors are likely to have contributed to the increase in the success rates, it appears certain that this project has made large contributions to the improved success rates at the target schools.

Table 7. Improved Success Rates of the First School Learning Certificate/Certificat d'Études Primaires (FSLC/CEP) at the Target Schools

(Unit: %)

School District	2013/14 (Before Project Completion)	2016/17 (After Project Completion, Before the Crisis)
Bamenda	78.4	86.6
Bali	93.4	97.1
Ndop	54.6	70.1
Santa	94.6	100
Tubah	47.5	81.9
Bafut	97.3	100
Fundong	60.4	87.7
All Target Schools	75.8	87.0
North West Region as a Whole	87.0	89.8

Sources: Face-to-face interviews/questionnaire surveys, data provided by North West Region DREB

### 3. 3. 2. 2. Other Positive and Negative Impacts

#### 3. 3. 2. 2. 1. Impacts on the Natural Environment

Because this project was to improve the existing primary schools' facilities, few negative environmental and social effects were expected, and no environmental assessment has been conducted. According to the interviews with the executing agency officials, the measures that address any possible undesirable effects, such as the cutting and embankment of slopes at the sites and the installation of rainwater treatment facilities, have been carried out as planned. No negative impact on the natural environment, which had not been foreseen at the time of planning, has been confirmed.

<sup>17</sup> As the crisis continues for a long time, the FSLC/CEP success rate has subsequently declined sharply. This is probably because an increasing number of students have become not able to attend the classes necessary for the preparation of the exam as they stay at home or the school is closed. The success rate for the North West Region at the time of ex-post evaluation is 51.0%.

#### 3.3.2.2.2. Land Acquisition and Resettlement

There was a case where residents had illegally set up a temporary house in a corner of a large primary school yard (public land). And their evictions became necessary when constructing school yard fences. However, no conflict between the residents and the government, and such, ever occurred, and no compensation was made because it had been squatting.

#### 3.3.2.2.3. Other Impacts (Gender)

As mentioned above, the project's aim of improving access to education for girls through the development of the gender-separated toilets for boys and girls and the subsequent creation of the girl-friendly environment has not been achieved. But, because the number of girls is generally higher than that of boys at the target schools, girls' access to education has not been regarded as an issue. Moreover, the number of enrolled students has been higher for girls than for boys in the North West Region as a whole, and the FSLC/CEP success rate in the North West Region has also been consistently higher for girls than for boys.

Summarizing effectiveness and impacts, the target "number of classrooms that can be used continuously at target schools," as well as the target "number of students who can learn in a safe environment at the target schools," have been achieved, regarding effectiveness. In addition, securing the safe storage spaces of teaching materials and administrative documents has improved the management capacities of teachers and contributed to more effective classroom teaching in many schools. Furthermore, as a result of the construction of toilets with a sanitary environment, the health and hygienic conditions of the students have enhanced and the number of the registered infections of the students has decreased. Regarding the impacts, the share of permanent classrooms in primary schools in the North West Region improved nearly 10 percentage points after project completion, and this project is likely to have contributed to the reduction of regional disparities to a certain extent. Moreover, the FSLC/CEP success rates have risen at the target schools, and thus a certain effect on improving the quality of primary education can be confirmed.

In light of the above, it has been found that the expected outcomes were generally accomplished, and thus the effectiveness and impact of the project are high.

### 3.4. Sustainability (Rating:②)

#### 3.4.1. Institutional / Organizational Aspect of Operation and Maintenance

The day-to-day maintenance of the facilities and equipment developed by this project has been expected to be jointly handled by the school council, the PTA, and the head teacher. In particular, the PTA has played a crucial role<sup>18</sup>. As the number of students has been declining in many schools due to the Anglophone Crisis, however, the functioning of the PTA has been weakening at the time of ex-post evaluation. As the crisis

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<sup>18</sup> For example, the replacement of the cabinet and door locks that got broken and the installment of protective iron door fences have been funded through PTA levy. Also, PTA levy was used to hire maintenance workers and temporary teachers.



continues with no end in sight, a lot of households have started to move to French-speaking regions to send their children to school there. Even if the crisis would be brought under control quickly, those households are likely not to return to the North West Region soon. Therefore, the North West Region's education officials are now concerned that the organizational arrangement for maintenance that relies heavily on the PTA will not function as smoothly as it used to be, at least, in the next four to five years.

With regard to the long-term maintenance, the MINEDUB's Japanese Project Execution Unit used to play the leading role in the formulation of decennial, large-scale maintenance and repair plans<sup>19</sup> during the periods when JICA projects for the construction of primary schools had been continuously implemented. But the said unit was dissolved in March 2017 after the completion of this project for the construction of primary schools, and no long-term maintenance and repair plans have become formulated afterwards. In light of the above, although no large problem has occurred yet, the organizational structure of both the day-to-day operation and maintenance at the school level and the long-term operation and maintenance by the executing agency has been weakened compared to before. Thus, there is a minor problem in its institutional aspect.

#### 3.4.2. Technical Aspect of Operation and Maintenance

Skills required for day-to-day maintenance and repairs have been the levels that can be sufficiently dealt with by local contractors. So far, repairs of the cracks on the classroom walls, replacements of the defect locks for the cabinets and the doors, installments of the protective iron door fences outside the doors, and such, have been done without problems. Also, in Bamenda, the repairs and rebuilding of the classrooms damaged by arson have been almost completed by local contractors. In light of the above, there is no specific problem observed in the technical aspect of operation and maintenance.

#### 3.4.3. Financial Aspect of Operation and Maintenance

According to the interviews with the head teachers and officials, it has been getting difficult to secure adequate funds for the day-to-day repairs and maintenance of the facilities and equipment through PTA levy and the functional credit from the government budget. Traditionally, PTA has been very active in the North West Region, and day-to-day maintenance expenses have been financed out of PTA levy. After the crisis, however, the collection has dramatically decreased as the number of students dropped and the number of parents who stopped making payments also increased.

In addition, the funds necessary for large-scale maintenance and repair plans had been financed through the counterpart budget of the on-going project during the periods when the projects for the construction of primary schools had been continuously implemented. Yet, as JICA projects with MINEDUB as the executing agency no longer exist, an adequate budget for long-term maintenance has not been secured any more at the time of ex-post evaluation<sup>20</sup>. For the long-term maintenance of the primary schools constructed by the JICA projects

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<sup>19</sup> For repainting/repairing and the maintenance of drainage facilities, etc.

<sup>20</sup> Given the purpose of the counterpart budget, a mechanism that depends on the counterpart budget for financing large-scale maintenance and repair plans does not appear to be a long-term, sustainable solution.

in all over Cameroon, MINEDUB has budgeted a total of 55 million CFA francs for 2019, and 70 million CFA francs for 2020 and for 2021, respectively. Over the next few years, needs for the long-term maintenance and repairs of all the schools are to be surveyed, and the amount required for long-term maintenance would be examined. Nevertheless, it cannot be said at this point that any additional source of long-term funds has been identified<sup>21</sup>. In light of the above, there are some minor problems in the financial aspects of operation and maintenance.

#### 3. 4. 4. Status of Operation and Maintenance

With regard to the status of operation and maintenance, the situation before the crisis broke out has been examined. The classrooms constructed by this project had been well-utilized except for the two oversupplied classrooms at GS/GBPS Bali Town, as mentioned above. (One classroom, however, has been used as a library at GS Mulang.) Although the two classrooms at GPS Atouakom and one classroom at GS Fundong, which had been damaged by arsons, are not usable at the time of ex-post evaluation, the repairs and reconstruction of the classroom at GPS Atouakom have been almost completed by the government. The educational furniture procured along with the facilities has also been well-utilized except for those had been burned out and those placed in the unutilized classrooms. Although the locks for the cabinets installed in the head teachers' rooms and meeting rooms, as well as the door locks for the head teachers' rooms, meeting rooms, and classrooms, had some defects, the PTA had played an essential role in day-to-day maintenance and appropriately dealt with the defect problems, and such, before the crisis. Some cracks on the classroom walls being finished with mortar at GS Mulang and water leakages from the roofs at GS Bamenda GMI, which occurred after the end of the defect liability period, had also been repaired by the Cameroon side. Therefore, there is no major problem in the status of operation and maintenance.

In light of the above, there are some minor problems observed in terms of the institutional and financial aspects. Therefore, sustainability of the project effects is fair.

## **4. Conclusion, Lessons Learned and Recommendations**

### 4. 1. Conclusion

The objective of this project is to enhance the learning environment for the students in the North West Region by rebuilding temporary and dilapidated classrooms and providing school furniture, thereby contributing to the achievement of the Cameroonian government's policy goals of reducing disparities across regions and improving the quality of primary education.

Since the project was consistent with Cameroon's national development policy, education sector strategy,

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<sup>21</sup> The annual budget allocated to the Japanese unit as the counterpart budget was roughly ten times the budget secured at the time of the ex-post evaluation. Since more than half of that budget is believed to have been allocated to the long-term maintenance expenses of school facilities, the current budget on long-term maintenance remains at the level of around 20% or less of that time.

and development needs at the times of planning and ex-post evaluation, as well as Japan's aid policy at the time of planning, its relevance is high. The outputs of the project, such as the constructions of classrooms and toilets and the provisions of desks and chairs, were produced as planned. Yet the project period exceeded the plan by one month, whereas the project cost was within budget. Therefore, the efficiency is fair. After completion of the project, the number of usable classrooms and that of students who are able to learn in the fine environment significantly increased. Furthermore, the improved educational environment boosted the students' academic performance, and the constructions of sanitary toilet facilities also have had positive impacts on the students' health and hygienic conditions. Thus, the effectiveness and impact of the project are high. As for the operation and maintenance, the "Anglophone Crisis" has negatively affected the number of enrolled students. Consequently, the existing organizational structure, which relies on the PTA and PTA levy for the day-to-day maintenance and repairs for the school, has not been functioning well. In addition, some minor problems were observed in the institutional and financial aspects of the executing agency. Therefore, the sustainability of the project is fair.

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

#### 4.2. Recommendations

##### 4.2.1. Recommendations to the Executing Agency

None.

##### 4.2.2. Recommendations to JICA

(1) Carrying Out Continuous Support: The "Japanese schools" have become schools with an excellent reputation in Cameroon. They have attracted children of the parents who strongly care about the education of their children and motivated teachers, and have contributed to improving the quality of education. Yet, providing superb school facilities compared to other public schools only to a small portion of students may not be entirely satisfactory from a viewpoint of expanding access to public education. Therefore, to further contribute to enhancing the level of primary education in Cameroon, it is desirable to continue constructing primary schools, while making such efforts of choosing construction sites more selectively, so as to avoid the "Japanese schools" from becoming the institutions for a relatively small number of lucky students who can attend there. The Cameroon side also highly appreciate Japan's past aids, which were made on a continuous basis.

#### 4.3. Lessons Learned

(1) Coordinating with Other Donors/Resources in School Construction: In Ndop, the classrooms constructed by Plan International have become unused and left abandoned after classrooms were built by this project.

Adequate coordination with other donors/resources should have been made in terms of school construction<sup>22</sup>.

(2) Determining the Number of Classrooms to be Constructed and Selecting School Construction Sites on the Basis of Dynamic Estimation on Student Enrollment: In some target sites located in a center of a school district, the number of the students who want to enter or transfer to the target school had rose after project completion. And before the crisis, the number of students per classroom in some schools exceeded 100. On the contrary, in some suburban and rural sites away from a center of a school district, the number of students per classroom remained around 30 to 40 even before the crisis. When determining the numbers of classrooms to be constructed at the time of planning, the project made calculations mostly on the basis of the number of students at that time only, regardless of projected changes in the number of students –giving only a minimum consideration to projected population growth, an increase in transfer students from neighboring schools, and so on<sup>23</sup>. If the project aims at increasing the number of students who can learn in a safe environment and reducing the number of overcrowded classrooms, it should dynamically forecast the demand for school enrollment to the extent possible and incorporate it in the plan. In the end, this project constructed a relatively large number of classrooms in not easily accessible suburban and rural areas within a school district. To make development outcomes more effective, it is desirable to devise an elaborate strategy such as constructing a larger number of classrooms selectively in a center of a school district, while considering population density and distribution, geography, and transportation access.

(3) Further Customizing Construction Design by School: It is not unusual that a site with more than 1,500 students and that with about 500 students have the same number of toilet facilities constructed. In the schools where the numbers of students are expected to increase rapidly after project completion, the number of toilets to be constructed, in addition to the number of classrooms to be built, should be determined flexibly according to the number of students. Also, it is desirable that the size of the meeting room is to be customized to a certain extent according to the size of the school (number of teachers). Currently, the size of the meeting room is the same whether for a school with a dozen teachers or for a school with a few teachers. Thus, in large-size schools, it is not possible for all teachers to have a meeting together.

(4) Installing Gender-Separated Toilets for Boys and Girls that Are Partitioned by Walls: To enforce the rule of the gender-separated toilets, it is desirable that the entrance and the sections for boys and girls are to be divided physically by walls (see Photo 5). With the current design of the toilet facilities, it is difficult to have the students (especially younger-age boys) observe the gender-separated toilets, particularly, at large-size schools, due to shortage of toilets.

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<sup>22</sup> According to officials from the executing agency, donor coordination has become better through the Local Education Group (LEG) since then.

<sup>23</sup> As an exception, to compensate for the shortage of classrooms in neighboring sites, two extra classrooms had been constructed at GS Mulang; that is, the number of classrooms to be constructed was set larger than the number of classroom shortage. Its demand forecast for school attendance, however, has turned out to be incorrect, and one of the classrooms is being used as a library.



Photo 5. Toilet Facilities