



1. Project Data:		Date Posted : 11/18/2002	
PROJ ID: P008784		Appraisal	Actual
Project Name: Education Reform	Project Costs (US\$M)	73.50	62.95
Country: Romania	Loan/Credit (US\$M)	50	50
Sector(s): Board: ED - Primary education (40%), Secondary education (40%), Central government administration (11%), Tertiary education (9%)	Cofinancing (US\$M)		
L/C Number: L3724			
	Board Approval (FY)		94
Partners involved :	Closing Date	03/31/2000	02/28/2002
Prepared by :	Reviewed by :	Group Manager :	Group:
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2. Project Objectives and Components			
a. Objectives			
(a) Update and improve quality of basic and secondary education by strengthening curriculum and teacher training, assessment and examinations, and textbook quality; and (b) develop and introduce measures that will increase efficiency in the management of public resources for education.			
b. Components			
(a) Raising quality of basic and secondary education (US\$65.6m) through: (b) curriculum development (US\$3.2m); (b) teacher training (US\$6.2m); (c) assessment and examinations (US\$6.8); (d) occupational standards and assessment (US\$2.3m); (e) textbooks (US\$47.2m). II. Improving education finance and management (US\$7.8m) through: (a) resource allocation, management and mobilization (US\$6.0m); (b) reform coordination and Implementation (US\$1.8m)			
c. Comments on Project Cost, Financing and Dates			
The project received extensions totaling two years. The costs allocated to project components were reconfigured to accommodate an additional sub-component (rural education). Loan proceeds were disbursed completely.			
3. Achievement of Relevant Objectives:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reform in the school curriculum for grades 1-12 was satisfactorily achieved by developing a total of 443 subject curricula in line with higher-level thinking skills. Teachers were given sufficient flexibility by making a major shift from a traditional approach to modern teaching based on creativity, critical thinking and student-centered. - The process of teacher training was institutionalized by setting standards, establishing National Centre for Teacher Training and making teacher training mandatory. However, the non-alignment of teacher training sub-component with improved curriculum, textbooks and learning materials could have caused a poor delivery of classroom instructions. - Assessment and examination system was strengthened by legally establishing national institutions like National Assessment and Examination Board and National Assessment and Examination Services. A system of improved evaluation and assessment with trained human resources for training examiners and setting standards in line with the new curriculum was put in place - Occupational standards and certificate practices were updated by producing 300 occupational standards in various domains, training 2000 specialists from 83 economic enterprises and issuing 200 individual competency certificates. - Textbooks for grades 1-8 were upgraded based on the new curriculum. A shift was made from state owned monopoly to private sector involvement in production and distribution of school textbooks. A total of 348 titles for 150 subjects were secured, and 360 evaluators and 6 evaluator-trainers were trained. - Rural education was promoted by providing rural students with learning materials and schools with computer and furniture School directors, parents and teachers were trained to enable them to understand the direction of new change in education. The project increased interest, understanding and self-esteem in the rural students, parents and community members. - Trainers, inspectors, principals, administrative and teaching staffs were trained in line with the new management and communication system in order to strengthen the efficiency of education finance and management. National Agency for Educational Management (NAEM) was established to accredit management training and financing, strengthen education management programs and develop professional standards for education administration. However, there was not much progress in leading the government to adopt a formula approach to resource allocation. - The implementation of project activities was facilitated, the donor and government were coordinated, project costs and finance were monitored, and procurement arrangements were made in a timely way by establishing a project coordinating unit 			

4. Significant Outcomes/Impacts:

The education policy was reoriented to emphasize the development of competencies, skills and attitudes, clear curricular and achievement standards, student-centered learning, and relevance to social issues and life. National institutions were formally established and a cadre of competent professionals was trained to sustain the development. These reforms were necessary for a country moving towards democratic society and market economy.

5. Significant Shortcomings (including non-compliance with safeguard policies):

Teacher training did not receive a very high priority in this project. The project could have been more effective in delivering quality education had the Bank been able to lead the Government to give adequate importance to teacher training. Without enabling teachers to fully appreciate and internalize the new change, change in curriculum, textbooks and evaluation system will not work well. In similar line, absence of assessments of risk and capacity of implementing agencies, and also the absence of monitoring and evaluation system could have a detrimental effect on the overall performance of the project.

6. Ratings :	ICR	OED Review	Reason for Disagreement /Comments
Outcome :	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	
Institutional Dev .:	High	High	
Sustainability :	Likely	Likely	
Bank Performance :	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	
Borrower Perf .:	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	
Quality of ICR :		Exemplary	

NOTE: ICR rating values flagged with '*' don't comply with OP/BP 13.55, but are listed for completeness.

7. Lessons of Broad Applicability:

- Competent technical assistance at the initial stage is crucial where fundamental social reform is expected. Had the project been able to convince the Romanian government about the importance of teacher training in the whole process of educational change, the implementation of this component would not have been delayed.
- Involvement of and communication with the government officials working at different layers is very important for getting the project messages across and approval on policy matters in time. Resistance at any level may cause unnecessary delay in implementation of the project activities.
- Comprehensive, complex and demanding reforms can also work well if initiated through formal establishment of national institutions.
- A comprehensive project is useful in a country which has not achieved political stability. A project with a wide range of components will lead whoever comes in power to find some components worth pursuing even if s/he may not agree with all components of the projects.

8. Assessment Recommended? Yes No

Why? No audit has been done on education in Romania. It is useful to look into how the national institutions have been working after the project was over in order to gain insights for the design and implementation of future projects.

9. Comments on Quality of ICR:

The overall quality of the ICR is exemplary. It would have been useful, however, to look more into the effect of nonalignment of teacher training sub-component with others on the overall quality of education delivered through the project.