



1. Project Data:		Date Posted : 08/16/2004	
PROJ ID: P000603		Appraisal	Actual
Project Name: Education III	Project Costs (US\$M)	7.5	6.77
Country: Comoros	Loan/Credit (US\$M)	7.5	6.77
Sector(s): Board: ED - Primary education (65%), Vocational training (14%), Central government administration (11%), Sub-national government administration (10%)	Cofinancing (US\$M)		
L/C Number: CN031; CP908			
	Board Approval (FY)		
Partners involved :	Closing Date	12/31/2002	12/31/2003

Prepared by :	Reviewed by :	Group Manager :	Group:
Helen Abadzi	Patrick G. Grasso	Alain A. Barbu	OEDST

2. Project Objectives and Components

a. Objectives

The Third Education Project supported investments in primary education and vocational training. Objectives were to: (a) improve primary education through improved quality and increased participation; (b) improve skill labor training through (i) establishment of a vocational training system and (ii) skills development for skilled labor; (c) develop effective project management. For the first objective, quality of the teaching-learning processes would be improved through: (i) development of better management practices to monitor delivery of the study program; (ii) provision of teaching/learning materials in sufficient quantities, both for class and individual learning activities; (iii) changes in the teaching-learning methods used by teachers in the classroom; (iv) changes in the supervision practices to develop and monitor implementation of effective teaching practices; and (v) support to development of learning assessment and education information systems at regional and central levels of the Ministry of Education (Learning was to improve in reading, writing and speaking of French and Arabic; basic math operations; application of basic skills in real life situation; and social behavior). School enrollments would be increased by (i) establishing local school committees with financial and managerial authority on public primary schools; (ii) providing adequate infrastructure.

b. Components

Components were closely tied to objectives: (a) quality of the teaching-learning processes would be improved through (US\$4.8 million): (i) development of better management practices to monitor delivery of the curriculum; (ii) provision of teaching/learning materials, both for class and individual learning activities; (iii) changes in the teaching/learning methods used by teachers in the classroom; (iv) changes in the supervision practices to develop and monitor implementation of effective teaching practices; and (v) support to development of learning assessment and education information systems at regional and central levels of the Ministry of Education. (b) Competencies of skilled workers would improve through the establishment of an autonomous, flexible and effective demand-driven training system in which training institutions and employers would get grants from the Government. The establishment of a performing vocational training system would be achieved through the creation of a small, autonomous institution, the Office of Vocational Training. The project would provide support for: (i) management and the initial financing of a Vocational Training Fund; (ii) the development of training modules; and (iii) the reorganization of existing vocational training institutions. (c) Effective project management capacities would be supported among staff in the Project Management Unit and Ministry of Education authorities in planning, execution, monitoring and evaluation of the sector.

c. Comments on Project Cost, Financing and Dates

The project was completed after a 12-month extension and disbursed fully. After an amendment, the Bank financed 100% of project costs. An expected community contribution to construction did not materialize. This loss along with a depreciation of the US dollar reduced the credit amount to about US\$6.7 million.

3. Achievement of Relevant Objectives:

Project objectives were partly achieved:

(a) **Improving participation in and quality of primary education** - partly achieved. The number of students in primary education increased from 82,789 in 1998/99 to 97,405 in 2002/03. About 262,272 textbooks were provided to students through a rental scheme, and a revolving fund was set up allowing for 65,000 new books per year. About 1800 pedagogical kits were acquired and given to the most qualified and senior teachers. About 4636 teacher training manuals were printed but a training program for the 2383 teachers (40% untrained) could not be fully

implemented. The target of building or rehabilitating 220 classrooms in 120 public schools was reduced to 146 classrooms in 83 public schools, and this target was met. Most classes were furnished, although the reduced budget fell short of needs. Supervisory staff were appointed (15 inspectors and 29 pedagogical counselors), but it is uncertain that the government will have funds to continue employing them.

(b) Improving skilled labor training - partly achieved. The Office of Vocational Training was established, and a funding mechanism was created for nonformal training in the private sector. However, the vocational training system was not restructured, and few results were obtained in terms of improving workers' skills. Around 150 training subprojects benefiting 4300 workers were financed, but an evaluation of 17 subprojects found that trainees in the informal sector could not find work or increase their earnings.

(c) Improving project management - achieved. Regional executive directorates were established in each island, that enabled most project activities to be completed in three years instead of five. Teacher salaries were paid during the project, but arrears of previous years could not be paid. School committees were trained that organized a textbook rental mechanism to meet school needs.

4. Significant Outcomes/Impacts:

The ICR reports that gross enrollment rate improved from 92% in 1998/99 to 101% 2002/03. (However, the Staff Appraisal Report shows a lower gross enrollment rate of 83% in 1996.) At project closing date, the school year had been increased to 180 days up from 100 days in previous years (unclear how this variable was measured). First-grade intake increased from 80% in 1998 to 90% in 2002/03.

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

Quality at entry was unsatisfactory, and many components were not clearly defined or measured. Thus, although the project addressed different educational issues, the ICR states that it was treated as an infrastructure investment. Many of the quality-related activities were not undertaken or achieved. Apart from the construction and textbook issues, the activities and targets of other activities were not well identified, and a budget was not clearly allocated. It proved impossible to set up a vocational education demand-driven system, particularly in the context of the underdeveloped private sector of Comoros. Some monitoring indicators listed in the Staff Appraisal Report were not relevant and were subsequently replaced. The project supported a strategy of teaching entirely in French and also teaching Arabic, although Comoros speaks one single language, Shikomori. No measures of student achievement were provided; however, dropout and repetition rates remained high (26-29%), suggesting a very low achievement level. The expected community support in school construction did not materialize. Increased construction costs meant that some training activities were not undertaken.

6. Ratings:	ICR	OED Review	Reason for Disagreement /Comments
Outcome:	Satisfactory	Moderately Satisfactory	The quality sub-objective in objective (a) was apparently not achieved; teaching-learning activities appear not to have been carried out, and little information is given about them. No evidence was presented to suggest that students learned more after the project than before.
Institutional Dev.:	Modest	Modest	
Sustainability:	Unlikely	Unlikely	
Bank Performance:	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Quality at entry was unsatisfactory. During implementation performance improved, but much time and energy were lost in components and monitoring indicators that could not be realistically carried out. The ICR rated Bank performance satisfactory on the introductory page but rated it unsatisfactory on p. 14. OED agrees with the latter rating.
Borrower Perf.:	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	
Quality of ICR:		Unsatisfactory	

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

7. Lessons of Broad Applicability:

Community cost participation is very important, especially in countries where the Government cannot provide the population with proper social services. Though communities are often too poor to contribute for school construction, they can competently monitor

textbook provision.

- In island states, setting up project implementation sub-units may help speed up implementation and ascertain equity of inputs to the various islands.

- Setting up a demand-driven vocational training system in an unstructured economy is not easy and requires prior appropriate knowledge and an analysis of the market labor force and the private sector.

8. Assessment Recommended? Yes No

9. Comments on Quality of ICR:

- The ICR was candid and discussed frankly the problems of the project . However, a number of items are missing from it.

-The objective (a) is considered achieved, but no evidence is offered about learning improvements . The MLA achievement results of 2000 would offer some indication regarding student achievement level .

- The ICR gives no information on the all-important teaching and learning activities described under objective (a), referring to them as 'secondary objectives' (p. 9), such as: development of better management practices to monitor delivery of the curriculum; provision of teaching/learning materials, both for class and individual learning activities; changes in the teaching/learning methods used by teachers in the classroom; changes in the supervision practices to develop and monitor implementation of effective teaching practices; and support to development of learning assessment and education information systems at regional and central levels of the Ministry of Education. No evidence is provided on their achievement.

-Overall, there are few data showing monitoring indicators, including the number of days schools were effectively open . Annex 1 offers few target numbers that are also unclear . For example, it is unclear whether repetition rates were to be reduced to 18% or by 18 percentage points. Net enrollment rates appear to be compared to gross enrollment rates in Annex 1. Enrollment rates are not compatible with those shown in the SAR .

-Rating of Bank performance is unclear (see principal performance ratings vs. p. 14)