

Ex Post-Evaluation Brief

Yemen: Expansion and Rehabilitation of Elementary Schools in Ibb and Abyan, Phase II



Sector	11220 (Education)	
Programme/Client	Expansion and Rehabilitation of Elementary Schools in Ibb and Abyan, Phase II ("CRES II", BMZ No. 2000 65 383)	
Programme executing agency	Ministry of Education	
Year of sample/ex post evaluation report: 2012*/2012		
	Appraisal (planned)	Ex post-evaluation (actual)
Investment costs (total)	EUR 6.00 million	EUR 5.55 million
Counterpart contribution (company)	EUR 0.90 million	EUR 0.60 million
Funding, of which budget funds (BMZ)	EUR 5.11 million EUR 5.11 million	EUR 4.70 million** EUR 4.70 million

* random sample; Remaining funds of EUR 0.4 million were transferred to the follow-on programme BEIP I.

Project description: The CRES II school construction programme complemented and extended the work of the Financial Cooperation (FC) programme "Construction and Rehabilitation of Elementary Schools in the provinces of Ibb and Abyan" (CRES I). This programme aimed to build some 200 new classrooms, rehabilitate a further 250 and construct additional buildings. The programme also intended to test improved concepts for maintenance and repair, featuring greater participation of the involved parties at those schools which were expanded or rehabilitated. Both CRES I and CRES II were implemented in close cooperation with the Technical Cooperation (TC) project "Environmental and Health Education at Elementary Schools in Ibb and Abyan".

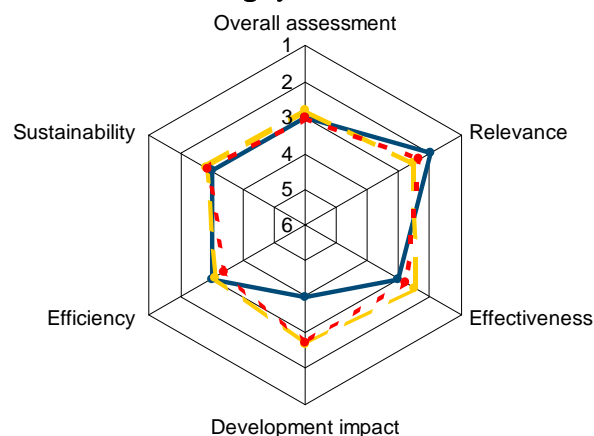
Objective: The overall objective developed during ex-post evaluation was: "To contribute to improving the quality and quantity of the provision of elementary school education and to closing the gender gap, especially in rural areas". Indicators selected were: an increase in the gross enrolment rate; an improvement in the gender parity index; an increase in the school completion rate; and an improvement in classroom achievement. The programme objective formulated was: "To improve conditions for learning". The indicators adopted were class size (pupils per class) and classroom area available per pupil in m².

Target group: The programme's target group comprised elementary and secondary schoolchildren, especially girls, in both governorates covered by the programme. At programme appraisal, it was estimated that the programme would reach approx. 25,000 schoolchildren.

Overall rating: 3

The programme's developmental effectiveness was rated as only satisfactory. The programme addressed developmental priority in Yemen: to promote the education system. In essence, the programme was appropriately designed to help improve educational provision as a result of its collaboration with TC and with other donors. Although the implemented measures contributed to higher enrolment rates and to closing the gender gap, the improvements of the education system were not satisfactory. Since 2011, the political crisis has negatively affected the programme's effectiveness. However, facing donors' ongoing and comprehensive support, it must be assumed that the effects achieved to date will be sustainable.

Rating by DAC criteria



—●— Project
 —●— Overall average rating - Sector (from 2007)
 - - - Overall average rating - Region (from 2007)

EVALUATION SUMMARY

Overall rating: In the light of the serious lack of classroom facilities in the country, the programme tackled the right issue. However, despite considerable progress made in the area of enrolment and in reducing the gender gap, the programme's overarching developmental impact has been rated unsatisfactory due to continuing shortcomings in the quality of education. Especially in Abyan, one of the two programme regions, educational indicators have been deteriorating since 2011 - at least partially or temporarily - as a consequence of the political crisis. However, these setbacks have only occurred during the last eighteen months, i.e. after the programme had shown positive impacts for several years. Since the political situation became calmer and a transitional government was appointed, the international donor community has pledged substantial reconstruction aid to Yemen. The Yemeni education sector is meant to benefit from these investments. Hence it is reasonable to assume that the deterioration in educational quality can be reversed within the reconstruction activities; we expect a sustainable impact in spite of the country's fragile situation. In view of these circumstances, the programme's impact - despite the evident shortcomings in educational quality - has been measured as still being satisfactory. Overall rating: 3

Relevance: At programme appraisal, the key problem was correctly identified as a shortage of classrooms. In view of low enrolment rates - due to the lack of classrooms, overcrowded classes and the high rate of population growth - expanding school infrastructure was an essential precondition for improving education. From today's perspective, more attention should be paid to the access to education as well as to increase the quality of education and to tackling the corresponding shortage of trained teaching staff. These issues have now been addressed in follow-on programmes. The causal chain assumed in the programme was that improving school facilities and building or rehabilitating classrooms, whilst paying special attention to the needs of girls, would help to improve the learning conditions, expand access to elementary school education (especially for girls), and enhance the quality of education. This was, and remains, plausible. The FC contribution was principally suitable to increasing access to education. Helping to improve quality was above all a design feature resulting from the cooperation with TC and other donors. Improving education remains one of the Yemeni Government's developmental priorities; this is expressed in various national policy documents, such as the poverty reduction strategy paper. Elementary education was and still remains a priority sector for German Development Cooperation (DC) with the Republic of Yemen. The programme was consistent with the objectives laid out in the priority area strategy paper, and it still is today. Furthermore, the programme supports MDG 2 (achieving universal elementary education) and MDG 3 (promoting gender equality). Donor coordination within the country has been recognised internationally as an exemplary model. However, in the province of Abyan, the process of school construction was not adequately coordinated neither with the Ministry for Education, nor with other donors, who were also financing schools within the CRES II's catchment area. This led to a migration of children to those schools. Given this background, we have assessed the programme's relevance as still being "good". Sub-Rating: 2

Effectiveness: as the indicators for this objective. Data from 1999 shows that the average class size at the start of the programme was 28 in Ibb and 36 in Abyan (compared to a national average of 35). According to the Ministry of Education, the corresponding values for the 2010/11 school year stood at 49 in Ibb and at 31 in Abyan. This indicates a pronounced deterioration in Ibb and an improvement in Abyan. It has not been possible to clarify why the figure for Ibb deteriorated so badly over the course of the programme. However, the evaluation of the preceding CRES I programme in Ibb also identified a persistent overcrowding in the classrooms. Before this programme was implemented, each pupil in Ibb had an average classroom area of 0.3 m², and those in Abyan 0.5 m². After the completion of these measures in 2003/04, these figures increased remarkably in both provinces and thus met the target value: in Ibb, each pupil in those schools covered by the programme had 0.75 m² of classroom area, and in Abyan 1 m². More recent data is not available. However, given the increase in class sizes in Ibb it is reasonable to assume that the school area available per pupil is correspondingly lower today. In addition, at least in Abyan, the 2011 political crisis and the still difficult security situation, including its temporary occupation by Al-Qaeda forces, may have led to a partial deterioration in learning conditions. Many people, including teachers and pupils, fled Abyan for more secure areas in neighbouring regions, with a corresponding impact on the levels of teacher absence, pupil absence, and lesson cancellations. In addition, 43 schools in Abyan were temporarily occupied by internally displaced people, and hence teaching could no longer continue in those schools. Due to lack of data, it has not been possible to clarify to what extent CRES II schools were affected by this. Nonetheless, it is fair to assume that, in view of extensive donor commitments, these negative developments can be reversed in a reasonable period of time. Given this background, we have assessed the effectiveness of the programme as still being satisfactory. Sub-Rating: 3

Efficiency: Good results have been achieved; in quantitative terms, the programme has made a substantial contribution to elementary school facilities in Ibb und Abyan. Instead of the planned 18 months, the actual duration of the programme was 32 months (running until late 2003), and the final review report was not produced until 2010. This 14-month extension in programme duration had various causes. Among these, the consultant's opportunities to travel and carry out supervisory activities were constrained by the tense security situation, at times community participation was wanting, and the performance of the construction companies was inadequate. One of the factors which delayed the production of the final review was that the consultant's final review report could not be accepted immediately as some information was either missing or contradictory. Actual consultant and programme management costs were 30% of total costs, compared to the originally planned 13%. In view of the extensive amount of supervision required - given the large number of classrooms constructed, some of which were in very remote locations - and in view of the complications which the Iraq war caused for the programme, this is still seen as acceptable. For the preceding CRES I programme, average construction costs were roughly USD 127 per m², and average rehabilitation costs stood at USD 54 per m². For CRES II, average construction costs came out somewhat lower at USD 119 per m², and rehabilitation costs were considerably higher at USD 88. This can be justified on the basis that CRES II also included a number of detail measures, whereas CRES I only envisaged major repairs. In the absence of field visits, it was not possible to determine whether the built classrooms are cur-

rently being used for their intended purpose; however, we presume that school activities in Abyan are at least partially constrained at present by the problem of internally displaced people. Programme efficiency has been assessed as satisfactory. Sub-Rating: 3

Overarching developmental impact: At programme appraisal, the overall objective was defined as: “To contribute to improving the learning conditions in elementary schools”, which was to be measured using the following indicator: “An increase in the number of pupils successfully completing elementary school education in the schools that were supported”. From today’s perspective, the overall objective should be formulated as: “To contribute to improving the quality and quantity of elementary school education provision and to closing the gender gap, especially in rural areas”. Suitable overall objective indicators from today’s viewpoint are: an increase in the gross enrolment rate (GER); an improvement in the gender parity index (GPI); an increase in the proportion of children who complete their elementary school education; and an improvement in learning achievement in elementary schools. At the national level, GER of elementary school education has increased from 60 % in 1998/99 to 64 % in 2002 and 76 % in 2006. The GER for girls has risen from 42 % in 1997 to 67 % in 2006. Although we have been unable to obtain neither verifiable nor comparable GER data covering these two provinces over the duration of the programme, available data suggests that, at least prior to the onset of the political crisis, enrolment numbers - measured both in absolute terms and also relative to the national trend - increased in both districts. In particular, the figures for girls rose. Nationally, GPI improved from 0.56 in 1999 to 0.78 in 2010/11. In both programme areas, GPI was around 0.50 in 1999. According to the Ministry of Education, in the 2010/11 school year GPI had significantly improved to 0.81 in Ibb and to 0.71 in Abyan. However, as a result of the political and economic crisis - and the increased poverty which comes along with it - the practices of child labour and of girls marrying at an early age are probably even more widespread now than before. The result is a corresponding decline (albeit presumably temporary) in enrolment rates, and an adverse impact on gender equality in education. With regard to the quality of elementary school education (i.e. internal efficiency), it can be seen that, despite slight improvements, it is characterised by high drop-out rates and high grade repetition rates. In 1997, the national average proportion of children who attended their ninth school year, compared to those who were registered for their first year of elementary education, was only 45 %. For Ibb and Abyan respectively, the figures were 40 % and 26 %. Precise comparable data are not available for this point in time. However, the available data shows that, prior to the onset of the political crisis, nationally only 37 % of children completed their ninth year of education. National drop-out rates for years 1 - 9 have improved from 13 % in 2005 to 7 % in 2010. In 2010/11, the figure for Ibb was 10 % and for Abyan 7 %. However, on average, it took the boys 14.7 years and girls 18 years to complete their elementary school education (years 1-9). Furthermore, in an international test, the 2007 *Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study*, in which 36 countries participated, Yemen had the worst results. Comparative data for the time of programme appraisal is not available. Primarily because of shortcomings in the quality of education, we have assessed the programme’s overarching developmental impact as unsatisfactory. Sub-Rating: 4

Sustainability: Notwithstanding numerous Yemeni efforts, the provision of external funding remains necessary in the medium term, both to finance expenditure on investment programmes and for urgently needed maintenance and repairs of school buildings. Further downward economic trends would put additional pressure on public finances and create risk. In early 2012, the donor community carried out a *Joint Socio-Economic Assessment*. This investigated the impact of the recent economic and political crisis, including its effect on the provision of basic social services such as health and education. It provides a basis for future donor support. At a conference of donors which was organised by the World Bank and held in Yemen in September 2012, donors pledged approx. EUR 5.1 billion of reconstruction aid to the crisis-afflicted country over a period of 18 months, predominantly for economic stabilisation, the labour market and basic social services. Hence, it can be assumed that in future it will once again be possible to build on the previous successes in the area of education. With regard to the maintenance of the schools financed by the programme, a plan was developed by the consultant in conjunction with GIZ. This was not implemented during the programme. The shortcomings regarding proper school maintenance which were identified in CRES I and CRES II – a lack of appreciation of the importance of regular preventative maintenance, the lack of formal guidelines on school maintenance, the low level of community involvement, the fact that preventative maintenance was only carried out in a haphazard fashion, and the level of maintenance budgets (which were either insufficient or poorly managed) – were first addressed in an accompanying measure to the follow-on programme. Additional maintenance is needed at the schools which were occupied or damaged during the crisis in Abyan. Yemen has made considerable progress over recent years in expanding access to education and in closing the gender gap. However, it must be assumed that - at least in Abyan, as a result of the problem of displaced people and the challenging security situation - it will not be possible to maintain these positive achievements in the immediate future. In order to accomplish sustainable improvements in the education system, promoting the quality of education as well as developing it in quantitative terms is essential. In view of the very recent pledges made by donors, we have assessed the programme's sustainability as still being satisfactory. Sub-Rating: 3.

Notes on the methods used to evaluate project success (project rating)

Projects (and programmes) are evaluated on a six-point scale, the criteria being relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and overarching developmental impact. The ratings are also used to arrive at a final assessment of a project's overall developmental efficacy. The scale is as follows:

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| 1 | Very good result that clearly exceeds expectations |
| 2 | Good result, fully in line with expectations and without any significant shortcomings |
| 3 | Satisfactory result – project falls short of expectations but the positive results dominate |
| 4 | Unsatisfactory result – significantly below expectations, with negative results dominating despite discernible positive results |
| 5 | Clearly inadequate result – despite some positive partial results, the negative results clearly dominate |
| 6 | The project has no impact or the situation has actually deteriorated |

Ratings 1-3 denote a positive or successful assessment while ratings 4-6 denote a not positive or unsuccessful assessment

Sustainability is evaluated according to the following four-point scale:

Sustainability level 1 (very good sustainability) The developmental efficacy of the project (positive to date) is very likely to continue undiminished or even increase.

Sustainability level 2 (good sustainability): The developmental efficacy of the project (positive to date) is very likely to decline only minimally but remain positive overall. (This is what can normally be expected).

Sustainability level 3 (satisfactory sustainability): The developmental efficacy of the project (positive to date) is very likely to decline significantly but remain positive overall. This rating is also assigned if the sustainability of a project is considered inadequate up to the time of the ex post evaluation but is very likely to evolve positively so that the project will ultimately achieve positive developmental efficacy.

Sustainability level 4 (inadequate sustainability): The developmental efficacy of the project is inadequate up to the time of the ex post evaluation and is very unlikely to improve. This rating is also assigned if the sustainability that has been positively evaluated to date is very likely to deteriorate severely and no longer meet the level 3 criteria.

The overall rating on the six-point scale is compiled from a weighting of all five individual criteria as appropriate to the project in question. Ratings 1-3 of the overall rating denote a "successful" project while ratings 4-6 denote an "unsuccessful" project. It should be noted that a project can generally be considered developmentally "successful" only if the achievement of the project objective ("effectiveness"), the impact on the overall objective ("overarching developmental impact") and the sustainability are rated at least "satisfactory" (rating 3).