

The impact of Australia's Investment in Indonesia's Basic Education system: some preliminary studies.

Three studies were commissioned by AusAID in 2009 and 2010 to monitor the progress and assess the impact of Australia's contribution to basic education in Indonesia. When the findings are read together, the reports provide a fairly holistic view of the intermediate impacts of Australia's program.

These three studies offer perspectives that are less readily obtainable through standard program evaluations. For example, the analyses suggest ways that Indonesia could draw the "hard to reach" children into formal schooling.

The **School and District Census and Survey 2009** (March 2010) was a complete census of the 2014 schools financed under the Australia Indonesia Basic Education Program (AIBEP) in 240 districts with qualitative data on principals, teachers, students, members of school communities and school supervision. The report provides a detailed insight to (i) the impact of the AIBEP construction program on access to and participation in junior secondary education, (ii) indicators of quality and governance standards in these schools, and (iii) the aspirations of the students and of their parents. The report raises some questions on the current methodology for locating new infrastructure. The report compares data over time and compares AIBEP schools with a selected sample of non-AIBEP schools. The main findings are presented here (as power point presentation), while the complete final Survey will be available in late January 2011.

The **Indonesia Reality Check Main Study Findings: Listening to Poor People's Realities about Basic Education** (May 2010) is an in-depth qualitative study of families living in rural poverty and their local providers of basic education, through AusAID-supported schools. The report provides some insights about the on-the-ground realities of investment in basic education. This study only provided "snapshots" and does not attempt to make any conclusive statements or generalisations about the AIBEP program or about education in Indonesia overall. Yet many observations of the Reality Check shed light on important issues facing policy-makers concerning quality and relevance of junior secondary education. By providing insights into the daily reality of some of the poorest segments of the population, the report contributes to policy-makers' understanding of what pro-poor policy in education might include.

The **Small In-depth Study of the Early Impact of AIBEP on School Financing and School Management** (December 2009) examined the early impact of Australia's program on school resourcing and management and on school communities in a sample of 30 AIBEP schools built in 2006, with a comparative sample of 15 non-AIBEP schools. The schools sampled were remote, and many required the researchers to make difficult and long land and sea travel to reach the communities. Although the timeframe (three years post intervention) is generally accepted as too short to measure impact of an educational program, some interesting preliminary findings emerge.