



# Annual thematic performance report 2009: Education

December 2010

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## Summary

This annual thematic performance report for education reviews the performance and quality of the education program for the calendar year 2009. Education is a flagship of the Australian aid program. Enhanced support for basic and secondary education, technical and vocational education and training and tertiary-level scholarships is helping to give more children access to good quality schools, to provide pathways out of poverty and to develop leaders. AusAID's support has strengthened national education systems, expanded school infrastructure, and improved the quality of education provided to children in Asia and the Pacific.

Improvement in performance requires a continuing focus on developing Agency capacities to engage more effectively with partner countries and other development agencies. To be effective, we will need to develop a stronger evidence base and a better understanding of country contexts and education priorities. This is recognised by AusAID and is being addressed through the development of a results based education strategy and concurrent investments in knowledge and its workforce.

## Overview of Australia's Education development assistance in 2009

Australia is supporting countries to achieve their education objectives, including the education Millennium Development Goals (MDG) and the Education for All goals,<sup>1</sup> and to develop the higher-order knowledge and skills all countries need for prosperity and stability.

In 2009, AusAID invested \$540.9 million in education development assistance initiatives.<sup>2</sup> This represents approximately 14 per cent of total Australian Overseas Development Assistance. Of this, \$187.3 million (35 per cent) supported basic and secondary education, including primary education, basic life skills for youth and adults, and early childhood education. To enhance the effectiveness of education and training systems in partner countries, AusAID directed \$116.9 million (22 per cent) to education policy and planning initiatives, facilities improvement, and targeted training of key personnel, including teachers. AusAID provided \$38.6 million (7 per cent) in support of vocational education priorities. Recognising the interconnections between the different parts of the education sector, \$187 million (35 per cent) was invested in multi-sectoral education and training initiatives, and \$6.2 million (1 per cent) supported higher education. Chart 1 provides a breakdown of AusAID

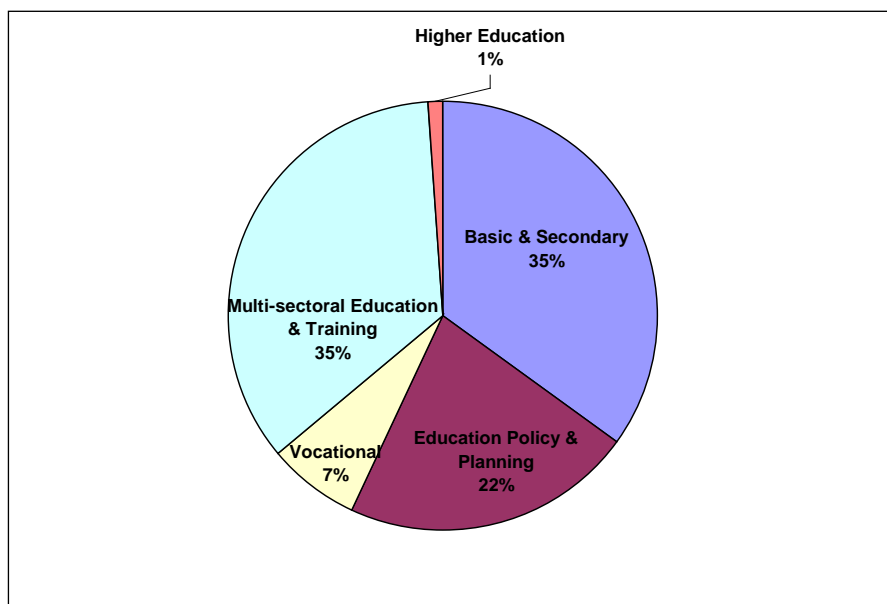
<sup>1</sup> MDG 2 – to achieve universal primary education, MDG 3 – to promote gender equality. The Education for All (EFA) movement is a global commitment to provide quality basic education for all children, youth and adults. The six goals of EFA are to expand early childhood education, access to primary education for all, promote learning and life skills, increase adult literacy by 50 per cent, achieve gender equality by 2015, and improve the quality of education.

<sup>2</sup> This includes support for scholarships



education spending.

**Chart 1: AusAID Education Spending in 2009**



In 2009, Australia supported education development in 23 countries mainly in the Asia Pacific region. Australia's main education programs are in Indonesia, Papua New Guinea the Philippines, East Timor, Bangladesh, Laos and the Pacific.

Table 1 (below) drawn from Annual Program Performance Reports<sup>3</sup> shows progress in attaining education objectives across a range of countries had either improved or been maintained. In Table 2 (below), education program implementation was generally rated highly. Program performance ratings of Relevance, Gender Equality, Efficiency, Effectiveness and Sustainability each exceeded AusAID's corporate performance targets.<sup>4</sup> Monitoring and Evaluation performed less well. This is recognised by AusAID and a stronger performance framework for the sector is being developed. The high program performance represents a significant achievement, given AusAID managed 86 separate education sector initiatives in 2009 with a high degree of complexity and diversity across country programs.

Multilateral organisations remain key partners for AusAID's education programs. Approximately ten per cent of AusAID's education funding is channelled through multilateral mechanisms. In 2009, AusAID provided funding to:

- the **Education for All Fast Track Initiative** (\$24 million in 2009-10), a global partnership to accelerate progress towards universal primary education by 2015 (MDG2).
- UN agencies including the **World Food Program** (\$180 million four year Strategic Partnership Agreement signed in October 2009) with \$40 million for school feeding

<sup>3</sup> The Annual Program Performance Reports (APPRs) are prepared by AusAID each year for each country or regional program. The reports include a summarised assessment of all AusAID initiatives and this provides much of the information presented in the Annual Thematic Performance Reports.

<sup>4</sup> AusAID's corporate requirement is that 75 per cent of activities make satisfactory progress toward their objectives. AusAID, *Improving basic services for the poor: Annual Review of Development Effectiveness 2009*, Australian Agency for International Development, Canberra, November 2010, p. 14.



and **UNICEF** (\$19.6 million in 2009) to accelerate progress towards the education MDGs.

AusAID's **Education Resource Facility** (\$2.18 million in 2009-10), launched in 2009. The facility provides advisory support, research services and learning and development support for Education programs at country and global levels. In 2009-10, AusAID's Education Thematic Group provided over \$400,000 for education research through the Australian Development Research Awards.

## Major Achievements

The major achievements discussed in this section are identified across a range of themes and are drawn from a variety of sources including Annual Program Performance Reports, Independent Completion Reports<sup>5</sup> and other sources including Laos and Papua New Guinea education program reviews.

As identified in the 2009 Annual Review of Development Effectiveness, performance in the education sector continues to improve at both the program and the activity level. Compared with the performance of the entire aid program, the Review determined that a higher proportion of education objectives will be fully achieved.

Specific achievements include:

**Improving education quality.** Key areas of support included teacher training, community engagement and targeted facility improvements. In Indonesia, AusAID supported the training of over 15,000 teachers, parents, principals and district education officials in school-based management. In Laos, a targeted approach in disadvantaged areas increased enrolments, built local capacity, trained pre-primary teachers and helped over 300,000 students and their families through a school feeding program. In Papua New Guinea, AusAID supported the procurement of 500,000 school textbooks, targeted school building in remote areas, and supported girls' education through school grants. This contributed to a marked increase in primary net enrolment rates. In the Philippines, AusAID supported the development of national competency-based teacher standards to promote better teaching practices and to allow better targeting of in-service training.

**Providing more children with opportunities to go to school.** Support included improved access to education, access for the disabled and disadvantaged and curricula for indigenous groups. In Bangladesh, AusAID contributed to improved access to primary and pre-primary education for over 1.5 million children who would otherwise not have access to schooling. In Kiribati, assistance for the School and Centre for Children with Special Needs (the only institution in Kiribati that provides for the needs of disabled children and their families) is facilitating better access to education for disabled children. In Sri Lanka, AusAID supported increased access to basic education for 134,000 disadvantaged or marginalised children in targeted districts. This included assistance for the training of over 2,000 school officials and teachers to implement contemporary approaches to education. In the Philippines, AusAID supported the introduction of curricula with indigenous relevance, targeting 185 schools.

**Providing value for money.** The 2009 Independent Completion Report of the AusAID-

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<sup>5</sup> Every major AusAID initiative is expected to be subjected to independent assessment upon completion in order to determine what has been achieved and to extract lessons learned from the initiative.



supported Vanuatu Secondary Schools Extension Project found that quality infrastructure was delivered at excellent value for money, with innovative approaches to engaging local contractors and communities in construction.<sup>6</sup> Australia is the only development partner financing construction of junior secondary schools in Indonesia, with over 2,000 new junior secondary schools constructed or planned across 197 districts. AusAID supported the construction of 479 classrooms in the Southern Philippines.

**Supporting education governance.** Highlights included the provision of Australian technical advice to Indonesia to support critical improvements in education quality and governance, including a national approach to quality improvement. Building upon this support, the Government of Indonesia developed a strategy and targets to strengthen sub-national capacity for education services delivery.

**Generating work-ready students.** AusAID's major investment in technical and vocational education and training is in the Pacific through the Australia Pacific Technical College. A mid-term review of the College indicated it is increasing the number of skilled workers across the Pacific.<sup>7</sup> By the end of 2009, nearly 1,000 Australia-Pacific Technical College students had graduated, providing 520 employers with trained staff (61 per cent in the private sector). In East Timor, Australia supported the establishment of a competency-based technical and vocational education and training system, through development of the National Labour Force Development Institute. More than 100 youths completed basic training in building and construction skills through the AusAID-funded Timor Leste Basic Skills Training Project. Through AusAID's support for the Vanuatu National Training Council, there are now 29 registered training providers in Vanuatu (none were registered before 2009) providing 95 accredited courses.

**Higher education.** Australia is supporting leadership development through the scholarships program, higher education reform in PNG and English language teacher training in the University of East Timor. To date, investment in higher education has not been a priority of the aid program.

**Australian support in education has moved towards sector-based programs of support.** AusAID programs for basic education in Laos have been provided in partnership with a range of multilateral agencies with AusAID serving as co-chair of the Education Sector Working Group. By extending the coverage and reach of education programs in Laos, more primary school teachers were trained, more schools were built, more school children have been fed, and more communities were engaged in the development of their schools.<sup>8</sup> In 2009, AusAID harmonised its support to Pakistan via the 'One UN' Education Program, which aimed to deliver effective and coordinated programs at the country level. In Papua New Guinea, AusAID's support reflected increased decentralisation in the education sector with sub-national management strengthened. Support was provided to Provincial Education Offices in the areas of planning and management, school-level Boards of Management and a national network of District Women's Facilitators. In the Philippines, AusAID contributed to financial reforms and support for systems to improve education sector management including the

<sup>6</sup> D Week, M Balan & A Nako, *Vanuatu Secondary School Extension Project Phase II: Independent Completion Report*, prepared for the Australian Agency for International Development, June 2009.

<sup>7</sup> K Schofield, Hong Tan, C Bryant & J Catchlove, *Australia-Pacific Technical College mid-term review*, prepared for the Australian Agency for International Development, June 2009.

<sup>8</sup> M Baird, *Service delivery for the poor: Lessons from recent evaluations of Australian aid*, Office of Development Effectiveness, AusAID, Canberra, November 2009.



Quality Assurance Framework and a system for pro-poor budget allocations to schools. In Samoa, AusAID's support for the education sector is aligned with government systems and harmonised with other development partners. A Mid-Term Review of the program partnership found that the Ministry-led sector reforms had achieved significant progress in curriculum reform, national assessment, and teacher development.<sup>9</sup>

**AusAID support to multilateral education initiatives.** Australia has committed \$50 million to the Education for All Fast Track Initiative (FTI) over four years (2007-11). FTI is the only global partnership between donors and low-income countries focused on providing quality education for all. The partnership includes most major education donors, with over 30 bilateral, regional, and international agencies and development banks. Assisted by the FTI, total primary enrolment grew by 19.3 million between 2000-2007. Enrolment in African countries supported by FTI has increased by 64 per cent (double the increase in non-FTI countries). Girls represent 60 per cent of new enrolments and primary school gender parity has been achieved in 16 countries. In July 2009, Australia was elected as one of six donor country members of the FTI Board of Directors. Prior to our election to the Board, AusAID led a team charged with reforming FTI's Education Program Development Fund (EPDF). Board membership provided Australia with greater leverage to influence FTI policy directions, including an increased focus on education challenges in the Pacific region. AusAID's engagement with the FTI at the global level allows the Education Thematic Group to better support posts to engage with the FTI in country. So far Laos, Nepal and PNG have undertaken FTI processes, and others, including Pacific Island countries, have demonstrated interest. Australia was able to use its role on the Board to enable continued eligibility to FTI support for East Timor and other Pacific Island countries and to help promote disability in FTI's work. Australia will continue to engage actively in the reform of FTI which came out of the mid term review in 2009.

In October 2009, Australia signed a \$180 million four-year Strategic Partnership Agreement with the World Food Program. This includes \$40 million for dedicated school feeding programs in Asia, Africa and Latin America to reduce the number of school children who suffer hunger, and to improve school attendance and education results.

**Scholarships in the education sector.**<sup>10</sup> Scholarships are an important tool for building leadership and developing the skills needed to achieve development outcomes. In 2009, 75 scholarships were provided for students to study education. This represents some 6 per cent of all long term scholarships awarded for 2009. Fields of study included education policy and administrative management, early childhood education, primary education, higher education, vocational training and teacher training.

**Improving knowledge.** In 2009, AusAID's Education Thematic Group supported three Australian Development Research Awards: (i) an evaluation of the impact of an early childhood education and development initiative across Indonesia; (ii) a case study of education, creative industries and development in East Timor; and (iii) a study to identify strategies to sustain professional learning communities for teachers in remote primary schools in Papua New Guinea.

<sup>9</sup> MESC, Samoa Education Sector Program II: Mid-Term Review Report, Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture, June 2010.

<sup>10</sup> Reporting on the overarching scholarships program will be through a separate Scholarships ATPR.

**Table 1: Ratings of the program's progress in 2009 towards AusAID Education Objectives**

APPR Region or Country	Objective <sup>11</sup>	Rating in 2007/08	Rating in 2008/09	Rating in 2009	Change
Africa Regional	To build relationships between Australia and Africa that will strengthen Africa's human resource capacity ("The Australia Awards for Africa Program and the Australia Africa Partnerships Facility will be the main programs through which this objective will be met")	n/a	n/a	Green	-
Indonesia <sup>12</sup>	Improving Basic Education				
2008	i. Access	Green	Green	n/a	-
	ii. Governance	Green	Green	n/a	-
	iii. Quality	Green	Amber	n/a	-
2009	Access to quality research and analysis informing policy decisions and policy implementation	n/a	n/a	Amber	-
	Gol projected infrastructure requirements met for Junior Secondary Schools for districts with low GET nationwide	n/a	n/a	Green	-
	A national system delivering strengthened sub-national capacity for education system management	n/a	n/a	Amber	-
	Improved human resource development coordination and people-to-people links	n/a	n/a	Green	-
Kiribati	Improved standards in Basic Education, in terms of both access and quality	Amber	Amber	Amber	Unchanged
Laos	Mitigation of key constraints to equitable access to quality basic education in targeted poor geographic areas	n/a	Green	Green	Unchanged
	Better government and donor resource management through implementation of 10 year education sector framework	n/a	Green	Green	Unchanged
Pacific Regional	Enhanced service delivery (including education)	n/a	Amber	Amber	Unchanged
Pakistan	Improve basic education through enhancing the overall quality of basic educational services, expanding access for underserved and disadvantaged groups and strengthening educational governance	n/a	n/a	Amber	-
Papua New Guinea	Significant, measurable progress towards the achievement of universal basic education by 2015	Amber	Amber	Green	Improved
Philippines	The Dept. of Ed better able to manage its resources to support schools and teachers	Green	Amber	Amber	Unchanged
	Improved education opportunities for boys and girls including Muslim and indigenous groups	Amber	Amber	Green	Improved
Samoa	Improved education	Green	Amber	Green	Improved <sup>13</sup>
Solomon Islands	Improved Service Delivery: Improve progress towards the MDG targets	n/a	n/a	Amber	-

<sup>11</sup> Note the Objective wording has changed over time for many country programs. The wording of Objectives provided in the 2009 APPRs has been used. This APPR wording change may affect comparability with 2007 and 2008 ratings.

<sup>12</sup> Objective wording is substantially different in 2009, representing a series break. 2008 Objectives are left in place for comparison, and 2009 Objective wording has been added as new rows.

<sup>13</sup> The Samoa APPR showed a Green rating for 'Improved Education', and stated 'Unchanged' 'Relative to previous rating'. The information provided in the preparation of the ATPR showed an Amber rating in the 2008 APPR.



APPR Region or Country	Objective <sup>11</sup>	Rating in 2007/08	Rating in 2008/09	Rating in 2009	Change
Timor-Leste	Strengthen Basic Education Service Delivery	Amber	Amber	Amber	Unchanged
South Asia Regional	To promote good governance and contribute to improvements in basic service delivery (with a focus on health, education and natural resource management at the state and community level)	-	-	Green	-
Tonga	Develop infrastructure to improve the everyday lives of people	Amber	Amber	Amber	Unchanged
	Improved technical and vocational skills	-	-	Green	-
Vanuatu	Improved Education: support increased access and quality of education for all boys and girls and equip them with relevant skills and knowledge	Green	Green	Green	Unchanged

Note:

- The objective will be fully achieved within the timeframe of the strategy.
- The objective will be partly achieved within the timeframe of the strategy.
- (red) The objective is unlikely to be achieved within the timeframe of the strategy.

## Portfolio Review

**Table 2: Quality at Implementation Reports – Rating of Objectives**

	Relevance		Effectiveness		Efficiency		M&E		Sustainability		Gender Equality	
	Numb er	%	Numb er	%	Numb er	%	Numb er	%	Numb er	%	Numb er	%
Very high quality	17	22 %	8	11 %	2	3 %	0	0 %	0	0 %	7	9 %
Good quality	40	53 %	28	37 %	34	45 %	18	24 %	19	25 %	30	39 %
Adequate	16	21 %	24	32 %	30	39 %	34	45 %	45	59 %	32	42 %
<b>Sub-total Satisfactory</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>96 %</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>79 %</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>87 %</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>68 %</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>84 %</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>91 %</b>
Less than adequate	3	4 %	15	20 %	10	13 %	18	24 %	11	14 %	5	7 %
Poor quality	0	0 %	1	1 %	0	0 %	5	7 %	1	1 %	2	3 %
Very poor quality	0	0 %	0	0 %	0	0 %	1	1 %	0	0 %	0	0 %
<b>Sub-total Unsatisfactory</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4 %</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>21 %</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>13 %</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>32 %</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>16 %</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>9 %</b>

## Conclusions and recommended actions

AusAID's achievements in education in 2009 provide further illustration that it is in Australia's national interest to invest in education in Asia and the Pacific and beyond.



Education is central to growth and prosperity, critical to achieving all MDGs (particularly gender equality and maternal and child health) and provides the knowledge and skills all countries need to innovate and manage their changing environments.

In increasing education assistance, several challenges have been identified. These include:

**Work in fragile environments.** Among bilateral development partners, Australia is unique in that half of its entire aid program is delivered in fragile environments in the Pacific and Asia<sup>14</sup>. The 2009 Annual Program Performance Reports identified fiduciary, security, political, reputational, and institutional capacity risks in Australia's education sector partnerships. To mitigate these risks, AusAID supports education sector capacity building and institutional strengthening at the national and sub-national levels, with a focus on accountability, transparency and management for results.

**Support for education quality.** While there has been considerable progress towards equitable access to education in recent years, supporting quality learning outcomes remains a challenge. The 2009 Annual Program Performance Reports noted that in many partner countries, primary level drop-out rates remain high and student performance on standardised literacy and numeracy tests remains poor. In response, AusAID is increasing its support for whole of sector approaches, which bring together teacher training, curriculum reform, learning materials, school infrastructure and community involvement initiatives to raise overall educational standards. AusAID recognises that improving education quality standards requires a long-term commitment.

**Development partnerships.** In most partner countries, improving aid effectiveness in the education sector is a key priority. The 2009 APPRs noted the challenges and the opportunities associated with increased reliance on partner government systems and joint programming with bilateral and multilateral organisations. In a number of partner countries, AusAID has taken a leadership role among development partners, seeking ways of increasing national ownership, expanding alignment with local systems, and maintaining a focus on educational results.

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<sup>14</sup> OECD DAC, *Australia: Development Assistance Committee Peer Review*, Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, 2009, p. 11.