

PRIME Program

Annual Plan

Philippines' Response to
Indigenous Peoples' and
Muslim Education (PRIME)
Program

15 October 2011

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Acronyms and Abbreviations¹

ACR	Activity Completion Report
ALS	Alternative Learning System
ALIVE	Arabic Language and Islamic Values Education
ARMM	Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao
AusAID	Australian Agency for International Development
AUD	Australian Dollar
BEAM	Basic Education Assistance for Mindanao
BESMEF	Basic Education Sub-sector Monitoring & Evaluation Framework
BESRA	Basic Education Sector Reform Agenda
BEST	Basic Education Sector Transformation
BIAP	BESRA Implementation and Accountability Plan
BP	Batas Pambansa
CAR	Cordillera Autonomous Region
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CEIP	Community Education Improvement Plan
CO	Central Office
CO-PIP	Central Office Program Implementation Plan
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CRPD	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability
CSEIP	Community-School Education Improvement Plans
DBM	Department of Budget and Management
DEDP	Division Education Development Plan
DepED	Department of Education
DO	Division Office
DPO	Organizations of Persons with Disabilities
DRIP	Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
DSWD	Department of Social Welfare and Development
EBEIS	Enhanced Basic Education Information System
EDGE	Enhancing Disadvantaged Groups Education
EDPITAF	Educational Development Projects Implementation Task Force
EFA	Education for All
ExeCom	Executive Committee
FBPO	Field-based Program Officer
FM	Financial Management
FinCom	Finance Committee
GAA	General Appropriations Act
GAD	Gender and Development
GMIS	Grant Management Information System
GoA	Government of Australia
GoP	Government of the Republic of the Philippines
GPIDA	Gender, Poverty Inclusion and Disability Awareness
GRM	GRM International
IAC	Information, Advocacy and Communications Plan
IP	Indigenous Peoples
LRMDS	Learning Resource Management and Development System
LGU	Local Government Unit
ManCom	Management Committee

¹ Applies to the Narrative and to Annexes that do not have a separate list of Acronyms

MC	Managing Contractor
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MEF	Monitoring and Evaluation Framework
MEPA	Monitoring, Evaluation and Plan Adjustment
MIPE	Muslim and Indigenous Peoples' Education
MSA	Memorandum of Subsidiary Agreement
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NCIP	National Commission on Indigenous Peoples
NCMF	National Commission on Muslim Filipinos
NEDA	National Economic Development Authority
NGO	Non-government Organization
NSO	National Statistics Office
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OM	Operations Manual
OPIF	Organizational Performance Indicator Framework
OPIS	Organizational Performance Indicator System
OPS	Office of Planning Service
OSY	Out-of-School Youth
PA-HROD	Philippine – Australia Human Resource Organizational Development Facility
PAC	Program Advisory Committee
PCC	Program Coordinating Committee
PDD	Project Design Document
PDED	Program Development and Evaluation Division
PGS	Performance Governance System
PhP	Philippine Pesos
PIP	Program Implementation Plan
PMC	Planning and Monitoring Committee
PPD	Planning and Programming Division
PPP	Public-Private Partnership
PRIME	Philippines' Response to Indigenous Peoples' and Muslim Education
ProgCom	Program Committee
RAD	Rapid Assessment of Disability
REDP	Regional Education Development Plan
RExeCom	Regional Executive Committee
RFP	Request for Proposal
RFT	Request for Tender
RMM	Risk Management Matrix
RMP	Risk Management Plan
RDS	Research and Statistics Division
RO	Regional Office
R-PIP	Regional Program Implementation Plan
SBM	School-based Management
SIP	School Improvement Plan
SMPR	Six Monthly Progress Report
SPED	Special Education
STA	Short-Term Adviser
STRIVE	Strengthening the Implementation of Basic Education in Selected Provinces in Visayas
TA	Technical Assistance
TOR	Terms of Reference
TNA	Training Needs Assessment
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the Annual Plan

This document is the first Annual Plan prepared for the Philippines' Response to Indigenous Peoples' and Muslim Education (PRIME) Program. This Annual Plan covers the period from January to December 2012² and serves as the transition from the Inception Phase (March – December 2011) to the Implementation Phase (January 2012 – June 2014).

The 2012 Annual Plan follows on from the Inception Plan that was prepared in May 2011. The Inception Plan provided a detailed overview of program mobilization, management and implementation for the Inception Phase. This overview included proposed work plans and budgets, the safety and security plan and the initial operations and finance manuals.

The 2012 Annual Plan describes the PRIME program, its purpose and outputs and approaches that will guide the implementation of program activities, resources required and related costs. The Plan also covers related planning issues, including the proposed Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy - building on the M&E Framework in the Program Design Document (PDD), the Gender, Poverty Inclusion and Disability Awareness (GPIDA) Strategy and updated risk management and safety and security plans.

1.2 Program Background

The PRIME Program was designed to improve equitable access to and quality of basic education for girls and boys in disadvantaged Muslim and Indigenous Peoples' (IPs) communities – citing that many of these communities continue to be underserved with respect to the provision of basic education services. The PRIME program is intended to build upon and scale up throughout the country the support activities for Muslim and IP education that were developed as part of the Basic Education Assistance for Mindanao (BEAM) project that concluded in 2009. The PRIME Program is viewed by the Department of Education (DepED) as a significant contributor to the implementation of the Basic Education Sector Reform Agenda (BESRA) – the package of policy reform to assist DepED meet international commitments of Education for All (EFA) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDG). In particular, the PRIME Program is intended to focus on MDG Goal 2 – Universal access to quality primary education.

Initial discussions between the Australian International Agency for Development (AusAID) and DepED to design the PRIME Program began in the latter part of 2008 under the title "Enhancing Disadvantaged Groups Education" (EDGE). These discussions resulted in the preparation of the DepED proposal for the "Philippines' Response to Indigenous Peoples' and Muslim Education in September 2009 and the AusAID Request for Tender (RFT) of 18 September 2010 for the Philippines Muslim and Indigenous Peoples' Education (MIPE) Program. Originally designed with 60-months duration, the final design proposed 40 months duration. With contract signing between AusAID and GRM as the Managing Contractor (MC) on 15 February 2011, the program began implementation on 15 March 2011 as the PRIME Program.

The PRIME Program was designed with the intended delivery of the program to be across a total of seven Regions. This was also reflected in the original contract between AusAID and the MC. However upon mobilisation, DepED requested AusAID to include an additional two Regions – which had been part of the original design submitted by DepED and approved by The National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA). AusAID approved the request of DepED shortly after

² The PRIME Program is to reflect the GoP programming and fiscal year which is from January to December. To facilitate GoA programming and budgeting, the presentation of programs and budgets is also provided according to the GoA fiscal year which is July to June. This includes the provision on an indicative work and financial plan for January to June 2013 to accommodate the 2012/2013 GoA fiscal year.

mobilization. Contract Amendment 1 formalised the increase in scope to a total of nine Regions (including adjustments to costs and management structures). The Amendment also included a revised Milestone Schedule and other minor revisions to the original contract, as agreed between AusAID and GRM. Contract Amendment 1 was signed between AusAID and GRM on 1 July 2011.

1.3 Annual Plan Preparation

The preparation process for the 2012 Annual Plan was initiated at the first Monitoring, Evaluation and Adjustment (MEPA) workshop³ at the end of June 2011. The MEPA workshop provided the opportunity to gather the key internal DepED stakeholders together to provide for a common orientation and overview of the program, present and review the Inception Plan that would guide activities for the balance of 2011 and to validate and select from the 'menu of output' options that had been presented in the PDD. Attendees to the first MEPA workshop included:

- Representatives from the Office of Planning Service (OPS) including Programming and Planning Division (PPD), Program Development and Evaluation Division (PDED) and Research and Statistics Division (RSD)
- Representatives of the Bureaus of Education (Elementary, Secondary and Alternative Learning)
- Regional Planning Officers, Regional PRIME Focal persons and Regional Directors
- PRIME consultants and staff

It was the review, revision and validation of the 'menu of options' that started the planning process by each of the target Regions and by the central office units and bureaus. Based on the set of 'endorsed' outputs, each regional office and central office unit was required to develop their own Program Implementation Plan (PIP) for PRIME.

For the central office this process was relatively straight forward since the BESRA Implementation and Accountability Plan (BIAP) had already been prepared (albeit requiring some updating and revision). For the regional offices the task to prepare their Regional PIP (R-PIP) was more challenging since all of the regions had no Regional Educational Development Plan (REDP) to anchor their planning work on. However with the presence within each region of a PRIME Field-Based Program Officers (FBPOs) providing technical assistance, each of the nine regional offices, together with their priority target Divisions⁴ were able to submit to OPS their R-PIPs by early September 2011.

OPS, including representative from PPD, PDED and RSD – supported by the PRIME consultants – conducted a review of the submitted R-PIPs in mid-September with a priority focus on: i) identifying common elements that could be 'adopted' by the central office; ii) ensuring regions were proposing activities consistent with their mandate; and, iii) commenting on activities or processes that did not appear aligned with the purposes of PRIME.

The results of the review by OPS were presented to the regional office representatives during the second MEPA workshop at the end of September 2011. The review and ensuing recommendations from OPS were used by each region (and their priority Divisions) to revise their R-PIPs and to guide the development of their initial grant proposals based on the activities in the R-PIPs. Central office units and bureaus also reviewed, revised and validated their proposed activities as part of the

³ As referenced in the tender proposal by GRM and reflected in the Inception Plan, the quarterly MEPA workshop technology is an adaptation of a successful mechanism of the Strengthening the Implementation of Basic Education in Selected Provinces in Visayas (STRIVE) Project – wherein each quarter the key implementers and management were brought together to review progress, identify lessons learned, barriers to implementation and to make adjustments to existing plans to improve implementation effectiveness

⁴ To fast-track implementation, the Inception Plan proposed the selection of priority target Divisions based on available data. Ten (10) priority Divisions were identified by DepED to begin with the planning activities to implement the PRIME Program.

Central Office PIP (CO-PIP). For the purposes of presentation in the Annual Plan, the PRIME Program team has consolidated the R-PIPs and CO-PIPs to assist in programming and budgeting decisions.

2 Description of the PRIME Program

This section of the Annual Plan provides an overview description of the program, including re-iteration of the goal and objective of the program, brief descriptions of the components as well as the validated ‘menu of outputs’. An update of the management and implementation structures following submission and approval of the Inception Plan (and corresponding contract amendment) will be provided as well as brief discussions of the current developments in the four key cross-cutting themes: i) risk management; ii) monitoring and evaluation; iii) gender, poverty inclusion and disability awareness; and, iv) sustainability.

2.1 Goal, Objective and Component Descriptions

Through the consultative process with DepED, there have been adjustments to the wording of the program goal and objective that were provided in the Request for Tender (RFT) and contract. The revised wording does not change the ‘intent’ of the statements, but rather to provide additional clarification by DepED. These revised statements have been used to provide direction in the implementation planning process, to guide program activity to date, support the revision to the Monitoring and Evaluation Framework and Plan (see **Annex A**). The revised goal statement is:

The goal of the PRIME Program is: *To improve the quality of, and equity in, basic learning outcomes in disadvantaged IP and Muslim communities.*

The original objective statement in the RFT included two statements (essentially two objectives). To provide better guidance for planning and implementation and for effective monitoring and evaluation these two statements have been separated as two distinct objectives. This will also more clearly articulate the supply and demand side dynamics underpinning educational quality and access. The two objectives are as follows:

1. *Enable DepED to provide better access to an appropriate, policy driven, sustainable and quality education for girls and boys in Muslim and IPs communities.*
2. *Stimulate demand for education services from IP and Muslim communities.*

The use of the word ‘component’ for the program has been adjusted from the RFT and the Inception Plan to better reflect the implementation approach DepED wishes to use. In the previous documents, ‘component’ was used to reflect the following:

Component 1: Supporting the Demand Side: Attract IPs and Muslim children to school and keep them in school.

Component 2: Supporting the Supply Side: Enable DepED to address access and quality issues in basic education in disadvantaged IPs and Muslim communities.

Component 3: GoP Management and Monitoring Capacity Building Support: Support DepED at all levels to enable it to efficiently and effectively manage the Program and other initiatives that seek to improve the delivery of basic education services to disadvantaged IPs and Muslim groups.

In discussions with DepED, it was decided that the ‘demand/supply’ equation reflected more an implementation principle or approach rather than a useful way of organizing the program work outputs. As a result, the first two original components “Supporting the Demand Side” and “Supporting the Supply Side” were reorganized according the ‘elements’ of the program, namely “Indigenous Peoples’ Education” and “Muslim Education” with the third component “GoP Management and Monitoring Capability Building Support” remaining essentially the same as

“Capability Building and Institutional Strengthening” (and the fourth component being the standard Program Management component).

2.2 Validated “Menu of Outputs”

The PDD provided for a ‘menu of outputs’ which were intended to guide the direction of the program without being prescriptive or dictating what the outputs of the program ought to be. There were several reasons for this approach: 1) in response to the absence of sufficient data/information to inform the identification of outputs; 2) there was recognition that the program was to serve as support to DepED initiatives so flexibility was needed in deciding which outputs were important; 3) due to the commitment to the program serving the ‘demand-side’ part of the education equation wherein it would be difficult to pre-determine outputs without additional information as to what the actual needs would be.

Through the process of consultation at the two quarterly Monitoring, Evaluation and Plan Adjustment (MEPA) workshops in June and September 2011, as well as consultations within each region and with the Programming and Planning Division (PPD) and the Program Development and Evaluation Division (PDED) of the Office of Planning Service (OPS), a validated ‘menu of outputs’ was provided. While additional information from the Baseline Survey may reveal the need for additional outputs or revisions to existing outputs, the intent is for different locations – based on identified needs – to select from the ‘menu’ and to focus the implementation of the program on achieving the specific outputs selected from the ‘menu’. The result is the preparation of different implementation plans for different regions – an approach which recognizes the principles of decentralization of educational management and is aligned with the direction provided for in Republic Act 9155 – Governance of Basic Education (2001).

The ‘menu of outputs’ that has been validated by DepED is provided below:

Component 1: Indigenous Peoples' Education

Validated Outputs (9):

- 1.1 IP Policy and Strategies Adoption and Implementation
- 1.2 Development and Enhancement of School Improvement Plans (SIP)/Community Education Improvement Plans (CEIP)
- 1.3 Curriculum, Instructional Guides and Learning Materials Indigenized and Adopted
- 1.4 Education and Training Programs for IP/Non-IP Teachers Enhanced
- 1.5 Development and Implementation of Support Program for IP Education Leaders, Managers, Practitioners and other Stakeholders
- 1.6 Establishment and Operation of Regional IP Education Centers
- 1.7 Design and Implementation of Access Programs in Selected IP Communities
- 1.8 Establishment of Public-Private Partnership (PPP) Program on IP Education
- 1.9 Documentation and replication of desirable practices

Component 2: Muslim Education

Validated Outputs (6):

- 2.1 Review and Enhancement of Existing Policy on Muslim Education including curriculum
- 2.2 Development and Enhancement of Community-School Education Improvement Plans (CSEIP)
- 2.3 Design and Implementation of Access Programs in Communities with High Muslim Population
- 2.4 Enhancement of Education and Training Programs for Muslim/Non-Muslim Teachers
- 2.5 Development & Implementation of Support Program for Muslim Education Leaders, Managers, Practitioners and other Stakeholders
- 2.6 Establishment and Operation of Regional Muslim Education Centers

Component 3: Capability Building and Institutional Strengthening

Validated Outputs (2):

- 3.1 Training Needs Analysis (TNA) Developed and Conducted
- 3.2 Training Program for the 3 Program Components Developed and Implemented

Component 4. Program Administration and Management

Validated Outputs (6):

- 4.1 Planning System & Operations
- 4.2 Coordination & Communication Systems & Operations
- 4.3 Financial Systems
- 4.4 Monitoring and Evaluation System
- 4.5 M&E Reports and Operational M&E System
- 4.6 Program Management and Administration

2.3 Implementation Strategy

A number of principles were identified during the preparation of the Inception Plan that are being used to guide the design and initial implementation planning of the PRIME Program. Since these principles are at the core of the implementation approach, it is worth re-stating these principles. They are:

- i. **Flexibility:** proposed interventions will provide for flexibility in implementation, taking into account the major operational difficulties involved in delivering services in the selected regions and in working with the broad range of cultural, ethnic and religious differences of targeted communities;
- ii. **Responsiveness:** proposed interventions will be able to respond quickly, effectively and efficiently to identified needs for the provision of basic education services in the targeted communities;
- iii. **Relevance:** proposed interventions will be relevant to the specific requirements and identified basic education needs of the targeted communities;
- iv. **Demand-driven:** proposed interventions will not be based on the availability of a readily available “response”, but rather based on an assessment and analysis of the actual need or “demand” for services;
- v. **Evidence-based:** proposed interventions must have “proof” that there is a need for the intervention and that there is evidence of support from the targeted community;
- vi. **System Strengthening:** proposed interventions will strengthen and/or support adjustments to existing systems rather than establish additional systems and processes and will assist partner agency’s personnel to enhance the performance of their existing roles and responsibilities, rather than add new ones, and;
- vii. **Sustainability:** proposed interventions will build upon previous interventions by DepED and AusAID and be capable of being implemented in a sustainable manner and will promote strategies, skills and mechanisms which will increase the likelihood of long term sustainability – including the use of GoP and DepED structures and systems to implement the PRIME Program.

These principles have guided the conduct of activities during the inception period and will continue to serve as guide posts for future implementation activities, particularly in providing technical assistance and the building of capabilities of DepED, their partners, various stakeholders and ultimately of targeted beneficiaries.

Additionally, the PRIME Program adopted three guiding statements during inception planning which continue to guide action and decisions:

- The PRIME Program is a **DepED Program** – to be **implemented by DepED**;
- The DepED PRIME Program is **supported by AusAID**; and
- The DepED PRIME Program is **facilitated by the MC** contracted by AusAID

As a reflection of these principles and guiding statements, the Inception Plan proposed a number of adjustments to the approach, organization and requirements of the PRIME Program – most of which have been reflected in the contract amendment between AusAID and GRM. These include:

- **Increased Number of Regions:** Originally contracted for seven Regions, on request of DepED early on during mobilization, AusAID agreed to add two more Regions for a total of nine. The Regions now included as part of PRIME are: I, II, Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR), IV-B, IX, X, XI, XII, CARAGA.
- **Adjustments to Team Input and Organization:** There was agreement to modify the proposed organizational structure and team inputs to provide for technical assistance support to each of the nine regions as well as to strengthen the M&E technical assistance supports to DepED and the program. The modified structure proposed in the Inception Plan has been implemented and maintained.
- **Fast-tracking of Grants for Priority Divisions:** While not a contract amendment issue, the ‘fast-tracking’ of grants for priority Divisions was implemented by DepED – with the identification of ten (10) priority Divisions (based on available secondary data) to start implementation planning for grants as early as possible. The ‘fast-tracking’ was an implementation approach to mitigate the reduction in time from the original design of 60 months to the approved design of 40 months. In addition to the initial ten (10) priority Divisions, preparatory research to identify additional priority Divisions to be included as part of the Baseline Survey was completed in mid-September 2011. Based on the research provided, an additional fourteen (14) Divisions were identified for potential inclusion⁵ to ‘fast-track’ mobilization activities for inclusion in the PRIME Program. The priority Divisions identified by DepED are noted in the following table.

Priority Divisions for “Fast-Tracking” the PRIME Program

Region	Initial Priority Divisions	Priority Divisions for Potential Inclusion
I	Ilocos Sur	La Union
II	Isabela	Nueva Viscaya
CAR	Ifugao	Mountain Province Apayo Kalinga
IV-B	Mindoro Occidental	Palawan
IX	Zamboanga del Norte Zamboanga del Sur	Zamboanga Sibugay
X	Bukidnon	Lanao del Norte
XI	Davao del Sur	Davao del Norte Davao Oriental
XII	Sarangani	Sultan Kudarat South Cotabato
XIII	Agusan del Sur	Surigao del Norte Agusan del Norte

⁵ The additional 14 Divisions were identified for ‘potential inclusion’ since the Regions within which the identified Divisions are located must make a decision, based on capability and resource requirements (importantly GoP counterpart), whether or not any of the additional Divisions will be included.

- **Milestone Schedule:** to align with DepED reporting requirements, adjustments were made to the date of submission of some of the milestone reports. These adjustments were approved in the contract amendment and are included as **Annex B**.

2.4 *Program Governance, Management and Communications*

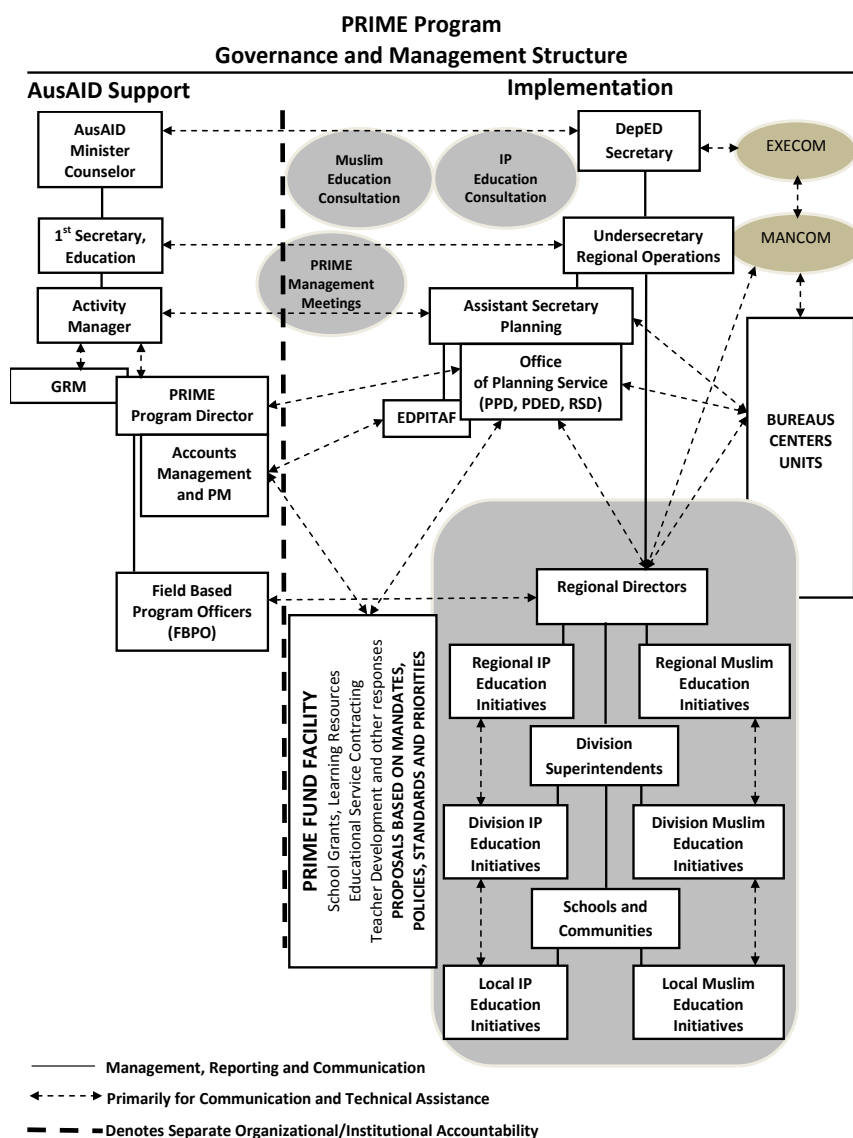
The following section details the governance and management structures and communication processes that have been adapted and/or proposed as a result of experiences and decisions made during implementation during the inception period. Specifically two structures described in the Inception Plan are affected – these are the proposed Program Advisory Committee (PAC) and the Planning and Monitoring Committee (PMC).

- **Program Advisory Committee (PAC):** The Inception Plan noted that the PDD and the contract had not identified the need for a Program Coordinating Committee (PCC). However during inception planning, concern was expressed over the decision by the new government to eliminate the Office of the Undersecretary for Muslim Affairs (who also had responsibility assigned for IP Education) and the limited progress of the technical working group for IP and Muslim education. It had been proposed to establish a Program Advisory Committee that would consider and seek resolution for major issues that might affect the PRIME Program.

Following discussions with the Office of Planning Service (OPS) as the coordination unit within DepED for the PRIME Program, the Assistant Secretary, Planning and more recently (10 October 2011) with the Undersecretary for Regional Operations (who has been assigned the senior management responsibility for the PRIME Program), DepED has requested that the proposal for a PAC be rescinded in favor of strengthening existing mechanisms that will enable and support consultations with key stakeholders external to and within DepED – for example the ManCom and ExeCom. DepED does agree with the requirement for periodic meetings with AusAID to discuss implementation and policy issues – most notably the PRIME Annual Plan. This approach is aligned to the conditions of the contract between AusAID and GRM (Schedule 1: Clauses 3.17 and 6.6) and is more aligned to a program implementation approach that supports system strengthening rather than establishing new structures and processes which are program specific.

- **Planning and Monitoring Committee (PMC):** The PRIME Planning and Monitoring Committee (PMC) convened its first meeting in mid-September 2011 in preparation for guiding the development of the annual plans and guiding the MEPA workshop. During the deliberations, members reviewed the proposed functions of the PMC and confirmed that all the functions proposed to be performed by the PMC were in fact functions of divisions of the OPS, specifically the PPD and the PDED. The PMC members recommended that the PMC be eliminated in favor of focusing technical assistance and support to OPS-PPD and PDED in strengthening the performance of their assigned functions. The recommended mechanism to provide the support was through the MEPA workshop technology wherein technical assistance and support would be provided to OPS to perform several of their key functions in relation to programs such as PRIME. This recommendation was confirmed by the Undersecretary for Regional Operations.

The governance and management structure diagram included in the Inception Plan has been modified to reflect the proposed changes noted above and is provided below.



Notes to the Governance and Management Structure:

- The PPD of OPS has the lead responsibility for coordinating the PRIME Program.
- Regions, Divisions and Schools/Communities will be responsible for assigning existing personnel to manage and support the implementation of PRIME Program in the field.

• Program Communications:

The PRIME Program Director maintains regular communications with OPS-PPD as the lead coordinator for the PRIME Program. Communication channels between the Program Director and the Accounts Manager and field offices are maintained and used to communicate program policies and operational requirements. The program recently launched its website to facilitate communications internally and to share information with stakeholders and interested parties. The website address is: prime.deped.gov.ph – part of the domain name of DepED.

Communication between AusAID and PRIME Program management is accomplished through a variety of mechanisms, including the formal processes of milestone submissions of Annual

Plans, Six-Monthly Progress Reviews, Issues Briefing Notes, Request for Approval of Short-Term Adviser (STA), contract amendments, contractor performance assessment reports, periodic progress reviews and through regular communications.

Informal channels of communication have also been established between the AusAID Activity Manager, the GRM Project Manager and the PRIME Program Director, including e-mail exchanges, telephone/text exchanges and periodic meetings to enable an open flow of information and exchange of ideas.

An updated Information, Advocacy and Communications (IAC) Plan has been prepared and is attached as **Annex C**.

2.5 *Cross-cutting Strategies*

Four cross-cutting and inter-related strategies form part of the PRIME program implementation approach. These strategies are: i) risk management; ii) monitoring and evaluation; iii) gender, poverty inclusion and disability awareness; and, iv) sustainability. While inter-related, each strategy and its current status is described below.

The Risk Management Matrix (RMM) (Annex D)

The Risk Management Matrix originally provided in the PDD was updated as part of the Inception Plan and have been reviewed and updated as part of the submission of the first Annual Plan.

A number of identified risks have been removed due to either a significant reduction of their risk probability or that the risk has been appropriately addressed due to mitigation action taken during the inception phase. In other instances the level of risk has been increased as a result of experience during implementation. A summary of changes (significant changes in ratings, deletions and additions) in the most recent Risk Management Matrix is provided below:

- **Peace and Order Situation (#4):** The risk ranking has been increased due to increased tensions related to the peace process as well as recent actions in remote areas of Mindanao associated with mining concerns.
- **Negative Perception of GoA Interests in Resources (#5):** This risk has been added due to increased tensions between mining companies and communities in Mindanao. Concern also has been expressed by some IP leaders on the appointment of a former development professional to a prominent mining company in Mindanao.
- **GoP Approval of IP Education Policy Framework:** This risk has been removed due to the signing of the National IP Education Policy Framework on 6 July 2011.
- **Changes in DepED Leadership and Management (#8):** This risk has been split from the risk associated with MC leadership and management and has been given a high risk ranking due to the probability of and impact of changes in management – for example, three of the key personnel in OPS who work with PRIME have been identified for scholarships in 2012 under the Philippine-Australia Human Resource Organizational Development (PA-HROD) Facility.
- **Implementation structure hinders engagement:** This risk has been removed since the implementation structure is not separate from the current DepED structure and processes.
- **Inadequate consultation of development of program procedures:** This risk has been removed as a result of the high level of consultation on planning, monitoring and evaluation processes that have occurred during the inception period.
- **Availability of DepED staff for participation in activities (#11):** This risk has been re-assessed and increased based on experience during inception. The number one barrier

preventing progress that was identified during the MEPA workshops was the conflicting schedules and other official demands and requirements placed on the DepED staff assigned to manage and support the implementation of the program.

- **Failure to nominate suitable counterparts (#13):** Linked to the risk above, the risk that unsuitable DepED counterparts might be assigned to support PRIME has been increased as a result.
- **Delays in the development of a program monitoring and reporting system:** This risk has been removed owing to the development of the Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (MEF) and Plan during the inception period.
- **Inadequate levels of GoP financing (#16):** This is a new risk that has been separated from the other financial risks due to the recent decision by the Department of Budget Management (DBM) not to provide counterpart funds for Official Development Assistance (ODA) initiatives. This fact, combined with the limited 2011 funds available within DepED for re-programming to support PRIME has emerged as a significant risk factor.
- **PRIME Plans beyond the absorptive capacity of DepED (#21):** This risk has been revised and the risk rating increased as a result of the number of competing activities that DepED is currently undertaking and responsible for – in particular the dominance of attention being given to the K to 12 initiative.

Most of the other adjustments have been minor – to better align the risk rank with the assessment of probability and level of impact. Additionally, to facilitate ease of reference for future review and revision to the Risk Management Matrix, the Risk Management Matrix entries have been numbered.

The Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (MEF) and Plan (Annex A)

As noted in the Inception Plan work on the updating and revision of the MEF began in June 2011 with additional work during August/September to ensure the development of a comprehensive and validated framework, strategies and systems as part of the first Annual Plan submission.

Considerable attention was given in the PDD to the importance of an effective and rigorous M&E system and this attention has been reflected in the activities undertaken during the inception period, including reviewing and updating the MEF, developing an appropriate M&E Plan and strategies which ensures a strong focus on strengthening the M&E capabilities of DepED and stakeholders during the implementation of the program.

The review and updating of the MEF has undergone a series of iterations and validations with DepED stakeholders which feature ongoing consultations and discussions with DepED personnel at the central, regional and divisional levels. These consultations have included discussions at the Monitoring Evaluation Plan Adjustment (MEPAs) workshops, regional cluster workshops, M&E specific workshops, and internal team planning meetings.

Overall the revised version of the MEF maintains the key design concepts and approaches of the initial version included in the PDD. However some significant additional and/or updated information, based on the results of the Inception Phase activities, has been made. The MEF has been particularly strengthened through:

- Revision of key outputs (removal, refinement, addition) and program component structure;
- Identification of realistic end of program outcomes (reflecting both demand and supply factors) taking into account the reduced time frame from the original intended design;
- Refinement of key evaluation questions to ensure consistency with expected target outcomes;

- Identification of relevant indicators aligned to the DepED Basic Education Sub-sector Monitoring & Evaluation Framework (BESMEF) that will enable reporting on all program levels;
- Clearer linkages to program sustainability strategies;
- Revision of the program Results Framework to reflect the current target outputs, outcomes and performance questions and data collection;
- A stronger emphasis on the need for culturally sensitive approaches to working with IP and Muslim communities;
- Incorporation of Gender, Poverty Inclusiveness and Disability Awareness (GPIDA) indicators and strategies;
- Updating stakeholder information needs and responsibilities;
- Updating key learning and knowledge sharing events; and
- Outlining the structure and steps to operate the M&E system through the M&E Plan.

The Gender, Poverty Inclusion and Disability Awareness (GPIDA) Strategy (Annex E)

The PRIME program design placed particular emphasis on ensuring that the learning needs of all boys and girls in the target areas would be addressed. To achieve this, the program has adopted an inclusive strategy so that access and benefits from education is provided to those who often face barriers to equitable participation in the target communities. This inclusive strategy, called the Gender, Poverty Inclusion and Disability Awareness (GPIDA) strategy, has two main goals:

- Provide guidance to the PRIME Program on strategies that will improve understanding and knowledge about the barriers to participation that may occur due to gender, poverty or disability; and*
- Assist DepED, through the PRIME Program, to be more responsive to and effectively manage issues related to diversity in a way that promotes and supports fair and equitable participation by those at risk of being marginalized and excluded due to gender, poverty or disability.*

The intention is that a single strategy will be developed and deployed that focuses on an integrated and holistic approach for inclusion with the argument that this approach is most effective and relevant for the program. This approach is preferred rather than presenting separate and distinct strategies to cover various diversity types – an approach that would run counter to the concepts of inclusive education. The GPIDA strategy was developed based on findings from initial consultations within DepED and with stakeholder groups.

Four Key Principles form the cornerstone of the GPIDA strategy:

- **Twin-track approach:** Both *mainstreaming* and *specific* affirmative actions for inclusion are important approaches to take to remove barriers to equal and fair participation by all children within the target areas of the PRIME Program.
- **Representation and participation:** Organizations of persons with disabilities and women can provide significant contributions to inform program decision-making processes because of their life-experience and the expertise which they can share.
- **Strong evidence and knowledge base:** PRIME Program decision making will be anchored on a strong evidence base from sound research and ongoing monitoring and evaluation support.
- **Reflective practice and learning:** Regular meetings and reporting activities will be structured to provide opportunities for knowledge sharing and problem solving.

Key areas of action have been identified in order to implement the GPIDA strategy as well as the engagement of program-wide activities - which include the baseline survey, priority setting mechanisms, and information advocacy and communication activities.

Inclusive specific activities will likewise be taken into account such as the Rapid Assessment of Disability (RAD) to assess disability inclusion in the focal areas; implementation of the disability inclusion demonstration project to set up an inclusion practice in the field; and gender-focused research and analysis to better understand underlying gender issues affecting boys and girls in the target locations.

The Sustainability Strategy (Annex F)

There was no requirement in the PDD, RFT or in the contract for the preparation of a separate Sustainability Strategy although there was reference to ensuring that the MEF would also reflect sustainability issues.

However given that the PRIME Program is only 39.5 months duration – which is a relatively short period in development terms, particularly if the intervention is looking to improve capabilities and contribute to institutional strengthening – the PRIME team consider it important to highlight sustainability as an issue and to provide some responses as to how sustainability might be addressed within the limited time program. The Sustainability Strategy is an attempt to address sustainability positively from the initial design and implementation of program investments - in line with the underlying commitment to sustainability.

Based on the PDD, Inception Plan and the MEF, the key benefits that could be expected to be sustained within DepED as various levels have been identified as:

Supply Side Benefits:

- Strengthened management in the use and analysis of data and information and specifically related to access to basic education by IP and Muslim communities;
- Strengthened management in the identification of priority targets for DepED interventions;
- Increased understanding and appreciation of the demands and appropriate responses for access to quality basic education by disadvantaged and marginalized groups, in particular IP and Muslim communities;
- Improved skills in educational planning and programming with specific emphasis on addressing the needs of disadvantaged IP and Muslim populations;
- Strengthened monitoring and evaluation knowledge, skills, practices and processes;
- Strengthened capacity in the management/implementation and monitoring and evaluation particularly in the area of grants;
- Strengthened networks with other agencies and stakeholders in supporting and sustaining provision of quality basic education especially to disadvantaged IP and Muslim communities;
- Institutionalized mechanisms for providing alternative delivery modes of learning for IP and Muslim basic education learners; and
- Enhanced capacity of the following in executing, managing/implementing and coordinating program to support IP and Muslim education:
 - i. DepED CO Units, particularly the Office of the Planning Services and its various divisions and the three (3) Bureaus, namely the: Bureau of Elementary Education (BEE), Bureau of Secondary Education (BSE) and the Bureau of Alternative Learning Systems (BALS);
 - ii. Nine (9) PRIME target Regional Offices; and,
 - iii. 24 Divisions participating in the PRIME Program.

Demand Side Benefits:

- Cluster schools/community learning centers sustainably engaged in community-school based activities to support projects and initiatives to improve access to quality education;
- Regional office initiatives managed and sustained with own its budget allocations and with resources mobilized and generated from other stakeholders and partners (e.g. LGUs, Civil Society, Private Sectors);
- Division office initiatives managed and sustained with own its budget allocations and with resources mobilized and generated from other stakeholders and partners (e.g. LGUs, Civil Society, Private Sectors);
- Multi-stakeholders' participation in educational programs and initiatives to support IP and Muslim education; and,
- Institutionalization of the practice of documenting desirable and good practices in IP and Muslim Education.

The designs of all PRIME activities are aimed towards improving the sustainability of benefits.

PRIME interventions cannot and must not be viewed as isolated 'project-based' interventions but activities designed to link within, support and strengthen the existing Government policies and operations. Some of the key processes and activities that will assist with mainstreaming and sustainability of benefits include:

- Engagement of DepED line managers and staff in the design and implementation of all program initiatives.
- Use of existing institutional structures and processes for decision making (for example, there are no program specific committees other than the Program Advisory Committee (PAC) that has been suggested by AusAID as a means to discuss policy issues with DepED and other stakeholders).
- Aligning program implementation planning with existing planning processes of DepED – e.g. the School Improvement Plan (SIP), the Division Education Development Plan (DEDP), the Regional Education Development Plan (REDP) and the BESRA Implementation and Accountability Plan (BIAP).
- Ensuring the program budget cycle aligns with the GoP fiscal year.
- Early support for engagement of key stakeholders at the national, regional, division and school/community levels which will continue post-PRIME.
- Building on the successful interventions of previous projects such as BEAM (IP and Muslim education initiatives, distance education, Alternative Delivery Modes, etc) and STRIVE (REDP, the EBEIS and the LRMDs).
- Placing a strong emphasis on M&E and sustainability in all activity designs.

The Sustainability Strategy provided in the annexes provides a cross reference check to ensure that the implementation strategies and plans of PRIME have addressed a number of proven sustainability strategies as identified in AusAID's AusGuide: *"Promoting Practical Sustainability"*.

3 Review of Progress and Implementation Approach

3.1 Progress to Date - (March – September 2011)

For the first Annual Plan, progress towards accomplishing the activities in the Inception Plan is being reported. In future Annual Plans, progress towards achieving the objectives for each component (against performance indicators) will be provided.

Progress towards attaining the indicative activities identified in the Inception Plan is summarized in the table below. Progress to date covers the first six months of the PRIME Program (March to

September 2011). Proposed activities for the balance of the period covered by the Inception Plan - to December 2011 – are also summarized.

*Indicative Activities of the Inception Plan
Progress to Date and Proposed Actions to December 2011*

Indicative Activities Planned	Progress to Date	Proposed Action to end 2011
Conclusion of Mobilization Activities	<p>DepED: Completed at the National, Regional and Priority Division Levels</p> <p><i>Central Office:</i> A focal person and an administrative staff from OPS-PPD have been assigned to coordinate the PRIME Program. The focal person led orientation of the regional implementation teams in the nine (9) target regions.</p> <p><i>Regional Offices (9):</i> All regions have formulated a core team consisting of IP and Muslim education focal person(s) and the regional planning officer. The team is provided technical assistance from the Field-Based Program Officer assigned in each of the regions.</p> <p><i>Division Offices (Priority Divisions):</i> All 10 priority Divisions have established implementation teams with orientation and guidance from Regional Offices.</p> <p>Managing Contractor: Completed with the adjustments as per Contract Amendment – in response to Inception Plan recommendations</p> <p>All consultants and staff are now engaged, offices at central and regional offices are operational with required equipment, communications and supplies</p>	<p>As necessary conduct orientations and training for newly appointed DepED personnel at CO and RO</p> <p>Regional offices to conduct mobilization activities within the additional priority Divisions identified at the end of September</p> <p>Regional offices to support priority Divisions in the orientation of target communities/schools for PRIME grants</p>
Design and conduct of the Baseline Survey	<p>On-going with Accomplishments as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Terms of Reference developed for two (2) stages. Stage 1: <i>Targeting of Priority Schools Divisions in Nine (9) Target Regions</i> and Stage 2: <i>Baseline Survey of IP and Muslim Communities in Target Areas.</i> •Stage 1 was completed in mid-September and presented for validation during the Monitoring, Evaluation and Plan Adjustment (MEPA) workshop on 28-29 September. •Contract awarded for Stage 2 following an RFP process due to the projected costs. •Design of the survey will commence in early October 2011 	<p>Completion of field work for Baseline Survey by mid-December 2011. Analytical work will commence in early January 2012.</p>

Indicative Activities Planned	Progress to Date	Proposed Action to end 2011
Rapid Appraisals to Identify Priority Divisions within the selected Regions	Completed Ten (10) priority Divisions (one each in all the regions, except Region 9 with 2) were identified based on available data. These priority Divisions participated in regional planning workshops to prepare the regional implementation plans	Based on the assessment provided in Stage 1 of the Baseline Survey (above) – additional priority Divisions will be identified in October 2011 and engaged in PRIME activities
Orientation and training of Regions and Priority Divisions on the PRIME Program	Completed Orientation sessions were conducted in all 9 regions and subsequently with the 10 priority Divisions Formal program launching activities have been held in two Regions/Divisions (Regions X, IV-B) Training activities have been started in some Divisions with target communities/schools	Orientation of additional priority Divisions will begin in October and November Formal program launches will occur in other Regions and Divisions with the issuance of the first grant release
Preparation (or review/revision) of Grant Guidelines for Schools/Community, Divisions, Regions and Central Office	Completed The Grant Guidelines have been developed and validated with DepED at various levels. Care has been taken to align with the SBM Grant procedures of DepED. Grant Guidelines have been disseminated to the field offices in Sept.	Following the planned grant releases in October 2011, undertake a review and revision of the grant guidelines
Proposal Preparation, Review, Awarding and Monitoring of the “Fast-Track” Grants for 2011/2012	Ongoing With the issuance of the grant guidelines (Annex G) in mid-September, Regional and Division offices are in the process of preparing grant proposals based on the regional/division plans. Three regions and three Divisions have submitted proposals to date In some Divisions, communities/schools have begun preparation of grant proposals	Monitor and facilitate the preparation, review and approval of grant proposals from the 9 Regions and 10 Divisions Encourage target communities/ schools to seek initial grants for mobilization and assess need for future grants
Conduct of Priority Research/Analytical Studies on the Madrasah Curriculum and Learning Materials	Under Discussion DepED has provided direction on the requirements for studies/research on the Madrasah Curriculum With identification by several regions as well as from the Office for Madrasah Education of the need for review, OPS will forward the request to senior management	Continue discussions with OPS/senior management to determine the scope and element of a comprehensive review of the Madrasah curriculum – draft TORs for a review will be prepared and discussed
Conduct of Priority Research/Analytical Studies on existing IP Curriculum models and Learning Materials	Postponed to Future Date This activity was included in both central office and regional implementation plans, but was not scheduled to begin until 2012 Some preparation work is being undertaken in Mindanao with the gathering of existing IP	Assist in the preparation of a proposal and TORs to conduct the research and analytical studies

Indicative Activities Planned	Progress to Date	Proposed Action to end 2011
	learning materials developed by all stakeholders in IP education	
Preparation of the first Annual Plan (October 2011)	For Submission With the preparation and review of the central office and the 9 Regional Implementation Plans – a consolidated annual plan has been prepared.	To be submitted to AusAID on or before 15 October 2011
Conduct of the M&E Assessment of Current Practice – during the 2nd Quarterly Monitoring, Evaluation and Plan Adjustment Workshop	Partially Completed The assessment of current level of M&E practice has been conducted for the initial 10 priority Divisions, however the assessment still needs to be completed for the regional and central office levels	Conduct assessment at regional and central office levels – analyze results to prepare recommendations and a capability building plan
Conduct of the 2011 2nd, 3rd and 4th Quarterly Monitoring, Evaluation and Plan Adjustment Workshops	Partially Completed MEPA Workshops for Quarter 2 and 3 were conducted – significant adjustments to the design and activities of the Qtr 3 MEPA were undertaken to improve processes and analysis	Conduct Quarter 4 MEPA by mid-December 2011
Establishment of and Support to the Governance and Advisory Structures (Program Advisory Committee – PAC and the PRIME Program Planning and Monitoring Committee - PMC)	PMC The 1st Planning and Monitoring Committee (PMC) meeting was held on 14 September 2011. Based on an assessment of the functions of the PMC, it was decided by PMC members that all of the functions were already functions of line units within OPS – thus there was a decision to dissolve the PMC and to use the technology of the MEPA to provide a process to strengthen the performance of OPS functions PAC The Program Advisory Committee was proposed as a mechanism for DepED, AusAID and key stakeholders to discuss policy issues – the PAC has not yet met	Review/revise the processes and technology of the MEPA in light of the intention to use the MEPA as a mechanism to strengthen the performance of OPS functions Explore alternatives to the PAC to discuss program policy issues in case the PAC mechanism is not implemented by DepED
Updated Manuals and Plans	Completed A number of manuals and plans prepared as part of the Inception Plan have been revised and updated. These include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Milestone Schedule (Annex B) •IAC Plan (Annex C) •Risk Management (Annex D) 	Revisions and updates will be made as required and as the situation warrants

Indicative Activities Planned	Progress to Date	Proposed Action to end 2011
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Financial Management (Annex H) •Operations Manual (Annex I) •Safety & Security (Annex J) 	

In addition to progress on the indicative activities identified in the Inception Plan (as summarized in the table above) – other key activities have been undertaken against which progress should be reported. These activities, progress towards attainment and proposed actions during 2011 are summarized in the table below.

*Key Activities in Addition to the Inception Plan
Progress to Date and Proposed Actions to December 2011*

Additional Activities	Progress to Date	Proposed Action to end 2011
Regional Program Implementation Plan (R-PIP) Preparation	Completed As PRIME activities must be linked to approved DepED work plans, there was a need to assist regions to develop appropriate plans (in the absence of REDPs and/or plans for IP and Muslim education - All nine (9) regions have completed their respective regional plans which have incorporated implementation activities at the Division levels	Encourage regional office action to develop REDPs Provide support to regions in the revision and adjustment of their R-PIP based on the feedback of the 3 rd Qtr MEPA Provide assistance in the review and adjustment of the R-PIP for the 4 th Qtr MEPA
Advocacy	National Launching of PRIME National launch of PRIME on 6 July attended by major stakeholders included ceremonies, events and signing of a Pledge of Commitment Establishment of PRIME website PRIME web-site is launched in mid-September under the DepED web-site (prime.deped.gov.ph) Regional Launches Significant launches in Regions X (Bukidnon) and Region Region IV-B (Occidental Mindoro) served to gather regional and division stakeholders to support and commit to support PRIME	Advocate for use of PRIME website as mechanism to share information and provide advocacy for IP and Muslim education Support other regional launches during the first grant release (October 2011) Implement Advocacy and Communications Plan across all PRIME locations
Grant Management Information System (GMIS)	Initiated In response to a request from DepED to strengthen the grants management and monitoring system, initial assessment and design work has been undertaken to establish and implement a Grant Management Information System for PRIME grants that will also serve SBM Grants for the DepED – it is intended that the GMIS will be a module of the ongoing development of the EBEIS	Continue design of the GMIS and apply this to grant allocations released in October – in a simplified format

Additional Activities	Progress to Date	Proposed Action to end 2011
Selection of Communities	<p>Partially completed</p> <p>Six (6) regions (4 in Luzon and 2 in Mindanao) have guided the priority Divisions to conduct the community selection process to identify target areas for PRIME support</p> <p>The process of selection of communities has involved consultation with internal and external stakeholders (including NCIP for priority IP communities and those with Ancestral Domain Titles), identification of a selection committees, data gathering and validation and assessment/priority setting of target locations</p>	Support regions to continue the quality assurance of the community selection process and support completion of community selection in all priority Divisions
Community Engagement Adviser	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>To reduce the risk of the 'supply' side of DepED dominating the agenda for determining the support required by target locations, a community engagement adviser has been contracted to provide guidance and technical assistance to DepED in appropriately engaging disadvantaged and marginalized groups</p>	Continue provision of adviser support to DepED during initial 'entry' into target communities

3.2 Significant Observations (Challenges and Changed Circumstances)

This section of the Annual Plan is intended to provide a brief discussion of the more significant challenges and changes that have been encountered during program implementation during the inception period. Many of these challenges and changed circumstances have been included in the revision to the Risk Management Matrix (**Annex D**).

Limited GoP Counterpart Fund for 2011 – Prognosis for Balance of 2011 and beyond

As explained elsewhere in the Annual Plan, two related factors contributed to the serious shortage of 2011 GoP counterpart funding – one was the Department of Budget Management's decision not to provide government departments with counterpart funds for ODA projects and the other factor was the inability of DepED to re-program sufficient GoP funds from existing budget allocations as the implementation of the program came in March 2011 when most of the budget re-allocations had already been made for the 2011 year.

DepED managers at all levels (central, region and division) have been vocal about the lack of counterpart GoP funds – a fact that has required these units to make sacrifices in other program areas to enable sufficient funds for PRIME to continue implementation. However, there is growing resistance from the field levels to continue to provide funds for PRIME - as expressed by regional directors who attended the PRIME MEPA workshop at the end of September 2011.

While DepED has committed to counterpart funds for 2012 and for the balance of the program, there is still uncertainty about the provision of funds for 2011.

Program Duration – Viewed by DepED and Stakeholders as Limited

Feedback from DepED at all levels and from IP and Muslim stakeholders concerning the duration of the program have been unanimous in advising that they consider a program of just over 3 years to be very short to achieve the envisaged results.

The processes implemented at the regional level to develop the PRIME plans for IP and Muslim education as well as initial consultations within Divisions and communities has revealed that there is a significantly large unmet need for access to quality basic education by disadvantaged IP and Muslim communities – a need that PRIME will only begin to address.

However, DepED is being assisted by PRIME to prioritize and to strategize to identify those critical activities and results that can be accomplished in the remaining program duration.

Of particular concern is the fact that there are only two full school years in which to implement PRIME grants – with tranche releases for the 2012/2013 school year in April and October of 2012 and for the 2013/2014 school year in April and October of 2013. As a result, there has been a ‘compression’ in the time period for release, utilization and monitoring of grants.

Absence of or Limited Use of Educational Plans for IP and Muslim Education

Activities, including those to be funded by the grant facility, require an appropriate educational development plan to be in place against which PRIME funds can be allotted.

Upon investigation, it was determined that none of the PRIME Regions have a Regional Educational Development Plan (REDP) however many Divisions have a Division Educational Development Plan (DEDP) – but these require review and adjustment to reflect better the needs for basic education by IP and Muslim communities. Since PRIME is not yet at the school level, it is difficult to ascertain the extent to which School Improvement Plans would need to be adjusted. There are no Community Education Improvement Plans (CEIPs) that the program is aware of.

At the national level the BESRA Implementation and Accountability Plan (BIAP) has been useful in providing guidance for determining priority activities to be supported by PRIME, however there is recognition that the BIAP section on IP and Muslim Education needs to be revised and updated.

As a contribution to the planning process, PRIME sponsored a series of workshops and provision of technical assistance to regions to assist in the development of plans specific to IP and Muslim education – while less than ideal, the process did highlight and emphasize the need for regions to prepare REDPs and for Divisions to undertake revisions to their DEDPs.

Since REDP preparation is beyond the scope of the PRIME program, the PRIME team has been working with DepED and AusAID to provide alternative avenues of support to DepED regions to prepare their first REDPs.

DepED View of PRIME as an ODA Project vs. a DepED Program with AusAID Support

Previous experiences of DepED central, regional and division personnel (perhaps even at the school level) have provided the impression that funding provided by an international donor will behave in the same way that previous ODA project funding has behaved – with the project supporting most, if not all, of the costs of activities identified by the project managers. This includes the perception by some DepED personnel that the GoA funded technical advisers are direct implementers of the program – which has caused some confusion, annoyance and frustration even though the orientation programs, documentation, discussions and presentations have repeated emphasized that PRIME is a DepED program being supported by AusAID.

Interestingly, those regions which are less prone to viewing PRIME as an ODA project are those regions in which there has not been an ODA project for some time. Those regions in which there has been a recent ODA project appear to be having a more difficult time accepting the imposed limitations on the technical advisers that they cannot be implementers.

Awareness of DepED personnel, including Regional Directors, that PRIME is a DepED program has improved with the conduct of the MEPA workshops where there is an opportunity to exchange views and discuss the program and the barriers to implementation. The fact that the MEPA is now led and coordinated by DepED OPS has assisted with adjusting the perception that PRIME is simply a foreign project with lots of money to implement activities that are determined by others to be priorities for the region.

Available Time of OPS and Limited Contributions of EDPITAF

Although the OPS was assigned the role of coordinating the PRIME program, OPS has very limited personnel to accomplish an entire host of assignments for the department – many of which are urgent and emerge with short time notice from the senior executives. This situation has resulted in limited time being available for some key decisions and the conduct of important activities and actions that would facilitate the smoother implementation of PRIME. For example, one of the issues raised at the recent MEPA workshop at the end of September was the late issuance of information and memoranda from central office about PRIME activities.

Compounding the limited time available of OPS staff, there have been limited contributions of EDPITAF to support OPS (even if it was mentioned in the MSA) and no discussions have taken place between OPS and EDPITAF on how to improve the situation.

The MC will continue to work with the OPS divisions responsible for guiding PRIME but will start to explore options as to how additional attention of DepED can be brought to address the coordination demands of PRIME.

Stakeholder Engagement at the National Level

DepED has not had a history of consistently and proactively engaging national level stakeholders with respect to IP and Muslim education. Aside from the consultative process to develop the design for the PRIME Program and the national consultative process to develop the IP Education Framework, engagement by DepED of national stakeholders such as the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) and the National Commission for Muslim Filipinos (NCMF) to inform initiatives for IP and Muslim populations has been limited.

The PRIME Program provides an opportunity for DepED to establish mechanisms to engage key stakeholders such as NCIP and NCMF at the national level in a consistent, meaningful and deliberately proactive way. Recent attempts by DepED to involve NCIP and NCMF in PRIME activities (e.g. Grant Guidelines and Baseline Survey), while results have been mixed, have demonstrated to NCIP and NCMF the willingness of DepED to involve national stakeholders. PRIME will continue to support, encourage and facilitate mechanisms to strengthen interaction and collaboration between DepED and national level stakeholders in IP and Muslim education.

Non-DepED Participants at the Local Level

Although key stakeholders such as NCIP and NCMF have not been included previously in DepED initiatives at the regional and division levels, PRIME has provided the opportunity for engagement of these and other key stakeholders. In fact, participation from these key stakeholders has been embraced by both the stakeholders and by DepED.

At the regional level, many regions have now established inter-agency committees which include key stakeholders to provide advice and support for IP and Muslim education initiatives – for example both NCMF and NCIP at the regional and division levels have been involved in the identification of priority divisions and communities where PRIME should be implemented.

Participation of other non-DepED participants in PRIME consultations and planning activities has been hampered by the resistance of DepED to cover the costs of non-DepED staff due to a ruling by COA that payments to non-DepED participants will be disallowed. This is particularly problematic for participants who are coming to consultations from remote communities.

Participation by other non-DepED participants, particularly CSOs and NGOs, have also been resisted by DepED with some DepED managers openly expressing discomfort with engaging these non-DepED organizations. Much of this resistance appears based on a perception that the organization has little to offer, is only after the money and will be critical of DepED actions. Through the support of PRIME, there is an opportunity emerging to demonstrate that DepED will need to work with other agencies and organizations to achieve the desired results of Education for All.

Local travel costs – MSA

The Memorandum of Subsidiary Agreement (MSA) between the GoA and GoP with respect to the PRIME Program clearly notes that one of the GoP counterparts to the program is the cost of local travel (land and sea travel costs) with airfare being a GoA responsibility.

In addition to the situation noted above wherein non-DepED participants are not eligible for reimbursement of local travel costs, the high costs associated with providing supervision in remote areas is serving as a ‘disincentive’ for Regions and Divisions to identify and select priority IP and Muslim communities for the PRIME Program which are remote and costly to access.

Emergence of 300 M PhP in DepED Budget for Madrasah Education

During the design of the PRIME Program there was no specific allocation in the DepED budget to support either IP or Muslim Education. Starting in 2010 with an allocation of 200 Million PhP, increased to 300 Million PhP for 2011, there has been a specific budget allocation in the DepED budget for Madrasah education.

Upon review of the budget items included for funding from this allocation of 300 Million PhP, many of the outputs/activities identified for PRIME have been included as part of the DepED budget. Unfortunately, there is limited knowledge of this budget allocation for Madrasah education at the regional and division level – resulting in the development of plans for PRIME for Muslim education which may not be as high a priority as at the time of design.

OPS has noted this issue and has supported the review of the Madrasah education program (including the utilization of budget allocations) to identify key areas requiring support from the PRIME Program.

No Focal Office for IP Education at National Level

For Muslim education there is an Office for Madrasah Education⁶ which reports directly to the Undersecretary for Programs and there are Arabic Language and Islamic Values Education (ALIVE) Coordinators at the regional and division levels.

⁶ The Office for Madrasah Education was established following the abolishment by the current government of the Office of the Undersecretary for Muslim Education

For IP education there is no office at the national level to deal with IP education issues, although at the regional level, there are examples of focal persons for IP education but these appear limited to those regions which were involved with the Basic Education Assistance for Mindanao (BEAM) project. Through the implementation of PRIME, the nine regions have assigned focal persons to address IP education and Muslim education where needed.

The absence of a national office for IP education impedes the discussion of critical policy and curriculum issues related to IP education.

PRIME Governance and Management

Two adjustments have been introduced into the DepED governance and management structure for PRIME. These are the elimination of the Planning and Monitoring Committee (PMC) and a rescinding of the proposed Program Advisory Committee. These adjustments have been discussed in the section on Program Description, however, in summary the adjustments were the result of the following:

- **The elimination of the PMC** was the result of a decision that the functions to be performed by the PMC were in fact existing functions of the OPS divisions and rather than set up a 'program-specific' structure it would be better to support OPS in performing their existing functions. The adoption of the MEPA workshop technology by OPS would provide the opportunity for PRIME support to OPS to strengthen their knowledge and skills.
- **The proposal to rescind the PAC** emerged following an analysis of reasons why the PAC had not met. DepED believes that it is proceeding with developing its own consultations with IP and Muslim education stakeholders without the PAC. Program specific discussions between AusAID and DepED, particularly with respect to policy issues and the annual plan approval could be scheduled as required.

3.3 Implementation Approach – Potential Adjustments to Design and/or Approach

This section of the Annual Plan presents and discusses major adjustments which should be considered to improve effectiveness and efficiency of the program. It is intended that these proposed significant adjustments would require further discussions and decisions within and between DepED and AusAID.

Allow GoP Costs (Local Travel) as part of Eligible Grant Funding

Three factors: i) limited GoP funds for 2011 to cover local transportation costs; ii) ineligible reimbursement of local travel costs for non-DepED participants; and iii) cost of DepED local travel to remote IP and Muslim communities – as discussed above provide justification for proposing an adjustment to the MSA between AusAID and DepED to permit – in warranted situations – the application of PRIME Grants to cover the costs of local transportation costs to prevent the current 'disincentives' to engage remote communities.

Adjustments in IP and Muslim Education Allocations in PRIME

With the emergence of the separate DepED budget allocation for Madrasah Education at 300 Million Philippine Pesos (PhP) for 2011, DepED is considering requesting a re-allocation of PRIME Funds in favor of IP education.

At present the distribution of PRIME funds is set at approximately 50 % for IP Education, 25% for Muslim Education and 25% for Capability Building/Project Management. Based on the existence of

the DepED budget for Madrasah education and the realization that many of the regions supported by PRIME identified IP education as a much higher priority than Muslim education, DepEd may propose a reduction in the allocation for Muslim education to approximately 15% and shift this amount to IP education resulting in an approximate allocation of 65%.

Length of Program – Linkage with BEST?

In response to the concerns expressed with the limited time duration of the program, AusAID has indicated that the intention is to link the PRIME programming with the design of the next educational development investment being developed by AusAID. Unfortunately this intention and the specific nature of this linkage is not clear with DepED officials.

To safeguard the investments of PRIME and to ensure appropriate linkage with future AusAID investments, it may be appropriate to conduct an Independent Progress Review of the PRIME Program in mid-2012.

Limit Number of Tranches for Grants

A significant concern associated with the duration of the PRIME program, is the limitation imposed on the number of school years that PRIME grants can be released and utilized. This has been further reduced from the initial proposal of 6 tranche releases over the duration of the program (October and April of each year starting October 2011) to only 5 tranche releases since the April 2014 tranche release that was originally proposed is too near the completion of the PRIME program (June 2014) to allow proper monitoring of funds utilization.

GPIDA Strategy as Inclusive Education Strategy – Regional Pilot Implementation of Strategy

The development of the GPIDA Strategy has resulted in the recommendation to apply the strategy in a limited number of locations supported by PRIME – to serve as a demonstration project from which lessons could be learned to adjust the strategy, influence national policy and to inform the implementation of the strategy in other locations.

Implementation of this recommendation could be supported through the application for a PRIME Grant by the central office.

Engaging EDPITAF, Increasing Involvement of Regions and Appointment for Vacant Positions

The limited time availability of OPS personnel needs to be addressed through a more purposeful engagement of EDPITAF as the supporting office to OPS – including possible re-assignment of EDPITAF personnel to OPS to provide the administrative support required for appropriate coordination of PRIME.

Another strategy is to increasing engage regional personnel to ‘share’ the coordination work load – a strategy that has been tested with the deployment and assignment of regional staff to facilitate sessions of the MEPA workshop. This could include re-assignment of selected regional staff to support OPS.

OPS advises that there are a number of unfilled positions within OPS divisions that if these positions were filled the workload distribution that would result would provide additional time for coordination of PRIME.

Naming of AusAID support to the PRIME Program...PRIME Fund?

During the time of tendering and contracting for the PRIME Program, the title “Muslim and Indigenous Peoples’ Education” (MIPE) was used. DepED on the other hand referred the program and “Philippines’ Response to Indigenous Peoples’ and Muslim Education” (PRIME).

While initially there was some concern over the naming of the program, DepED remained committed to the name PRIME and was being encouraged to view MIPE as the AusAID support to PRIME. A decision was made however that renamed the MIPE Program to PRIME.

At the present time, DepED continues to view PRIME as it’s initiative and even during the launching AusAID support was viewed as a ‘founding partner’ in PRIME.

To assist in reducing continuing confusion between the DepED PRIME Program and AusAID’s support to the program, it is proposed for the purposes of clarifying AusAID’s support to refer to the AusAID support as the “PRIME Fund”. This approach has been tested in the preparation of the grant guidelines and has been accepted by DepED.

4 Implementation Work Plans

4.1 Implementation and Resource Schedules

Through a series of implementation planning activities at the regional, cluster and national levels, detailed implementation plans for the last quarter of 2011, 2012 (to align with the GoP fiscal year) and an indicative plan for the first half of 2013 (to provide for the 2012/2013 GoA fiscal year) were prepared.

The consolidated implementation plan by month and by output (**Annex K**) is a compilation of the nine regional plans as well as a separate implementation plan for the central office (derived from the BIAP activities noted for IP and Muslim education as well as the common elements of the nine regional plans). Separate regional implementation plans and the central office plan have not been provided in this document, but can be provided upon request from either DepED OPS or the GRM office.

Since each region has different needs and requirements as well as varying capabilities and different timeframes to implement the program, each of the regional plans is different from each other – although there has been an effort to coordinate and organize similar implementation activities at the same time to improve efficiency and reduce costs. It is the consolidated implementation plan that must be considered as making the necessary contributions to support the attainment of the expected outputs and outcomes. Each region and the central office have their part to play in the attainment of the desired results – an approach that recognizes and respects diversity of needs and the role of decentralization in addressing that diversity.

It is important to note that the implementation and resource schedules developed by the regions and central office exceed the funding allocations that can be covered by GoA alone or even by both GoA and GoP. This is the result of pursuing a programmatic approach, in which the GoA support is simply a contribution to a significantly larger program to increase access to quality basic education by disadvantaged IP and Muslim communities. However, the proposed expenditures for the GoA contributions will not be exceeded.

4.2 Summary Description of Work Activities

The consolidated implementation plan provided in Annex K provides the consolidation by output level only and does not provide detail at the level of work activities. The reason for this is noted above – every region has developed a different implementation plan based on their requirements,

capabilities and schedules. In fact, regions have been supported to select and modify from the initial 'menu' of outputs to develop appropriate and relevant regional plans. Detailed consolidated and individual regional implementation plans are available from DepED or the GRM office.

Work activities in the regional plans also include the implementation work activities at the Division level – since the Region is responsible for oversight of Division activities. Work activities at the school level are not included as these activities were always intended to be addressed through grants.

Most of the work activities are relatively consistent across the regions consisting of workshops and seminars for improving knowledge and understanding with immediate follow-up activities related to application. Some regions have proposed regional policy research while others have sought to strengthen existing initiatives, such as revitalizing the Institute for Indigenous Peoples' Education (IIPe). For the most part the activities scheduled early on are primarily preparatory in nature – including planning and mobilization. Technical assistance has been provided to the regions and central office in the preparation of the plans to help ensure that proposed work activities are appropriate to and support performing of respective mandates at all levels of DepED.

Major activities in 2012 will include:

- Analysis of the Baseline Survey
- Conduct of follow-up qualitative investigations with selected target communities
- Conduct of a work practices survey at the school, division and regional levels to determine the effectiveness of DepED 'response' to the 'demand' revealed by the findings of the Baseline Survey
- Orientation and training to the balance of the Priority Divisions on the PRIME Program
- Initial preparation of Community Education Improvement Plans in target communities
- Enhancement of School Improvement Plans and Division Education Development Plans to reflect response for IP and Muslim education
- Implementation of the GPIDA Strategy in a selected Region
- 2nd Review/revision of Grant Guidelines for Schools/Community, Divisions, Regions and Central Office
- Monitoring of the 2011/2012 Grants
- Proposal Preparation, Review, Awarding, Implementation and Monitoring of the 2012/2013 Grants
- Conclude the conduct of the review of the Madrasah Curriculum and Learning Materials
- Developmental work on IP Curriculum and Learning Materials
- Development of Teacher Training initiatives for IP and Muslim Education
- Preparation of the second Annual Plan (October 2012)
- Conduct of the 2012 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th Quarterly Monitoring, Evaluation and Plan Adjustment Workshops
- Preparation of the 1st (January 2012) and 2nd (July 2012) SMPRs

It should be noted that the implementation strategy for work activities at the Regional and Divisional levels is managed through the development of grants proposals based on elements of the regional (including divisional) plans. Grant funds are awarded based on alignment to the approved regional plans.

4.3 Expected Outcomes by Component

As noted previously, the PRIME Program is organized into four separate components: Indigenous Peoples' Education; Muslim Education; Capability Building; and, Program Management.

Recent work completed with DepED on revising the PRIME Monitoring and Evaluation Framework and the preparation of the basic elements of the PRIME Monitoring and Evaluation Plan has provided for a review and validation of the outcomes expected of the program and for each component. These are provided in the table below and are organized according to 'supply' and 'demand' side and include a cross-reference to GPIDA.

End of Program Outcomes (EoPOs)	Component 1 IP Education	Component 2 Muslim Education	Component 3 Capacity building	GPIDA
Supply Side				
Strengthened DepED capacity in the management/implementation and monitoring and evaluation, particularly in the area of grants			✓	
A system in place for collecting and reporting better and relevant basic education data on IP and Muslim populations for basic education in the nine regions	✓	✓		✓
Key enabling policies and guidelines for adopting appropriate basic education pedagogy, content, and assessment	✓	✓		✓
Enabling guidelines for providing adequate and culturally-appropriate learning resources and environment to IP learners;	✓			
Enabling policies and guidelines synergizing collaborative mechanisms for Madrasah education and PRIME Muslim education		✓		
Strengthened policies and guidelines on hiring, deployment, and continuous development of teachers and learning facilitators in the implementation of IP Education Program	✓			✓
Strengthened capacity of appropriate multi-level units within DepED responsible for planning, implementing, and monitoring IP and Muslim education interventions	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mechanisms and institutional arrangements that will ensure coordination, knowledge sharing and sustainability of IP programs among various civil society and education partners	✓		✓	
Institutionalized mechanisms for providing alternative delivery modes of learning for IP and Muslim basic education learners	✓	✓	✓	✓
Enhanced and strengthened capacity in executing, managing/implementing and coordinating program to support IP and Muslim education	✓	✓	✓	
Demand side				
370 PRIME schools/cluster of schools/community learning centres (within the PRIME Divisions) actively engaged in community-school-based activities to support projects to improve access to quality education	✓	✓		✓
Increased number of RO interventions planned, managed/implemented, monitored and evaluated to improve IP and Muslim access to quality education	✓	✓		
Increased number of DO interventions planned, managed/implemented, monitored and evaluated to improve IP and Muslim access to quality basic education	✓	✓		
Increased percentage of community-school interventions planned, managed, monitored and evaluated	✓	✓		✓
Increased multi-stakeholders' participation in PRIME-supported interventions such as planning, implementation and M&E	✓	✓		✓
Increased percentage of internal and external stakeholders (education leaders, managers, school heads, teachers) trained on the management of various interventions including implementation of indigenized education/learning materials and instructions as well as enhancing capacity to effectively implement IP and Muslim education in communities.	✓	✓	✓	✓
Increased percentage of teachers trained and capacitated for effective IP and Muslim education program implementation	✓	✓		

End of Program Outcomes (EoPOs)	Component 1 IP Education	Component 2 Muslim Education	Component 3 Capacity building	GPIDA
Documentation of desirable and good practices in IP and Muslim Education;	✓	✓	✓	✓
Positive change/s in behavior, attitudes, perception among internal and external stakeholders towards IP and Muslim Education.	✓	✓	✓	✓

4.4 GoP Contributions

Two factors have influenced the provision of GoP counterpart funds as mentioned previously in the discussions on risks to the implementation of the program - one factor is a relatively recent decision by the Department of Budget Management (DBM) and the other factor is the timing of implementation of the PRIME Program.

The decision by the DBM not to provide separate GoP counterpart funds for ODA programs and projects – requiring government departments to budget for counterpart funds as part of their regular budget requests and allocations – came after the design of the PRIME Program but before the program was implemented. There had been an expectation based on previous practice that DepED would be able to obtain separate funding as the counterpart for ODA programs and projects. The DBM decision has meant, in reality, that DepED must ‘find’ the necessary financial resources to support the implementation of PRIME out of their existing budget allocation.

The timing of the start-up of PRIME (March 2011) was at a time when most of the 2011 budget allocations were already committed to continuing or newly implemented activities of the Department. The result has been that there has been no distribution of budget allocations from the central office to regional offices resulting in regional offices expending funds from savings or having to limit financial support to PRIME activities.

During the MEPA at the end of September 2011, some regional offices expressed serious concern over how they would be able to continue to support PRIME activities, including the possibility of not participating. This reaction by the regional offices has led to initial action within DepED senior management to allocate resources from other central office funds that are under-expended.

The PRIME Program has been informed by DepED senior management that DepED will be able to meet its GoP fiscal contributions for 2012 onwards through a re-alignment of some budget items.

6 ANNEXES

List of Annexes

Annex	Description
A	Monitoring and Evaluation Framework and Plan
B	Milestone Schedule – Revised
C	Information, Advocacy and Communications Plan – Updated
D	Risk Management Matrix – Updated
E	Gender, Poverty Inclusive and Disability Awareness Strategy
F	Sustainability Strategy
G	PRIME Grant Guidelines