Ex-Post Evaluation Report of Japanese Technical Cooperation and Grant Aid Projects in 2009 (Niger, Mali, Lesotho)

September 2010

JAPAN INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AGENCY

IMG Inc.

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Preface

Ex-post evaluation of ODA projects has been in place since 1975 and since then the coverage of evaluation has expanded. Japan's ODA charter revised in 2003 shows Japan's commitment to ODA evaluation, clearly stating under the section "Enhancement of Evaluation" that in order to measure, analyze and objectively evaluate the outcome of ODA, third-party evaluations conducted by experts will be enhanced.

This volume shows the results of the ex-post evaluation of Technical Cooperation and Grant Aid projects that were mainly completed in fiscal year 2006. The ex-post evaluation was entrusted to external evaluators to ensure objective analysis of the projects' effects and to draw lessons and recommendations to be utilized in similar projects.

The lessons and recommendations drawn from these evaluations will be shared with JICA's stakeholders in order to improve the quality of ODA projects.

Lastly, deep appreciation is given to those who have cooperated and supported the creation of this volume of evaluations.

September 2010
Atsuro KURODA
Vice President
Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)

Disclaimer

This volume of evaluations, the English translation of the original Japanese version, shows the result of objective ex-post evaluations made by external evaluators. The views and recommendations herein do not necessarily reflect the official views and opinions of JICA. JICA is not responsible for the accuracy of English translation, and the Japanese version shall prevail in the event of any inconsistency with the English version.

Minor amendments may be made when the contents of this volume is posted on JICA's website.

JICA's comments may be added at the end of each report when the views held by the operations departments do not match those of the external evaluator.

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Evaluation Result Summary

Prepared on 15 September 2010

External Evaluators: Satoru Takahashi, Shimako Narahara IMG Inc.

1. Outline of the Project		
Country: The Republic of Niger		**Project title:** The Project on Support to the Improvement of School Management through Community Participation
Issue/Sector: Education		**Cooperation scheme:** Technical Cooperation
Division in charge: Basic Education Section I, Basic Education Group, Human Development Department		**Total cost:** 365,019 thousand yen
Period of Cooperation	1 January 2004 – 31 July 2007	**Partner Country's Executing Organization:** Ministry of National Education (MEN)
		Supporting Organization in Japan:
Related Cooperation	Project on Classroom Construction in the Departments of Dosso and Tahoua in the Republic of Niger (Grant Aid)	

1-1 Background of the Project

The Republic of Niger, one of the poorest countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, has suffered from poor standards of education with huge regional and gender disparities. To address this situation, the Government of Niger had been trying to enhance access, quality and the system of education, placing great value on the decentralization of education through community participation. Above all, the Government encouraged each primary school to set up a school management committee (comité de gestion de établissements scolaires: COGES).

COGESs were organized on a pilot scheme basis in 2002. It was then recognized at the COGES evaluation meeting in 2003 that while some COGESs had produced positive achievements, others had not functioned. The attendants in the meeting therefore shared viewpoints that to make COGESs functional it was necessary to: provide training(s) for COGES members, involve more women, establish rules, and strengthen the regional education officers' support system. Under such circumstances the Government of Niger officially requested the Government of Japan to implement a technical cooperation project designed to develop, through capacity building of central and local administrators, an effective COGES model.

1-2 Project Overview

(1) Overall Goal

A model for School Based Management with community participation through COGES is expanded.

(2) Project Purpose

A model for School Based Management with community participation through COGES is reinforced.

(3) Outputs

1) Community participation in school management is enhanced.
2) Capacity of COGES in the target schools is enhanced in Tahoua Region.
3) Functional "COGES communes" (alliance of COGESs) are formed.
4) Support system for COGES is consolidated.
5) Replicability of COGES management model experimented in Tahoua Region increases.

(4) Inputs (as of the Project's termination)

Japanese side:

Long-term Expert 4
Short-term Expert 3
Trainees received 18 (5 in Japan, 13 in Burkina Faso)

Equipment 30 million yen
Local cost 119 million yen
Others 216 million yen
Total 365 million yen

Nigerien side:

Counterpart 23
Equipment 0 local currency (0 Yen)
Land and Facilities 2 office rooms for Japanese experts
Local Cost 0 local currency (0 Yen)
Others

Related Project: Project on Classroom Construction in the Departments of Dosso and Tahoua in the Republic of Niger (Grant Aid)

A fence constructed based on a school activity plan in Takeita Centre Primary School in Zinder Region

A thatched classroom constructed based on a school activity plan in Biliangue Primary School in Tahoua Region

Key Education Indicators for Primary School Improvement

(Except for enrolment, all numbers indicate increase in percentage points, 2006/2007-2008/2009)

Educational Indicators	Tahoua Region	Zinder Region	National Average
Increase in Enrolment (%) (from 2006/07 to 2008/09)	36.8 (207,616 to 284,004)	30.1 (192 966 to 251,136)	25.8 (1,235,065 to 1,554,270)
Increase in Enrolment Rate (percentage points)	15.3	11.2	10.8
Female Student Enrolment	15.6	12.0	11.2
Female Ratio to All Students	3.4	1.9	1.6
Pass Rate of CFPED	14.7	15.2	10.7

Source: Ex-Post Evaluation team

2. Evaluation Team

Members of Evaluation Team	Satoru Takahashi, IMG Inc. Shimako Narahara, IMG Inc.	
Period of Evaluation	05/ 10/ 2009 - 30/ 09/ 2010	**Type of Evaluation:** Ex-post

3. Project Performance

3-1 Performance of Project Purpose

The project purpose was mostly achieved. Specifically, COGESs were set up through democratic election and managed by elected members, and school activity plans approved at commune meetings were implemented accordingly. However, the strengthening of monitoring capacity and establishment of efficient monitoring system of COGES communes – later renamed the communal federation of COGES (fédération communale des COGES: FCC) - had yet to be achieved.

3-2 Achievement related to Overall Goal

Overall goal was achieved. A model for school-based management with community participation through COGES has been applied not only in the two target regions but also throughout the country. The official statistics showed that the target two regions had exceeded the national average for their increase in educational indicators. Besides, positive impacts have been observed in social and cultural terms.

3-3 Recommendations by Terminal Evaluation Study

In the short term, the following are recommended: 1) documentation of the COGES model, 2) standardization and clarification of FCC's role and function, 3) support to the COGES working group, 4) organization of stakeholder workshops at a national level, 5) external review of the COGES model, and 6) reinforcement of COGES policy. In the medium/long-term, the following are recommended: 1) strengthening of the Section of Promotion of COGES (Cellule de Promotion des COGES: C.P.COGES), 2) formulation of strategies at a national level, and 3) ensuring sustainability of the COGES model.

4. Results of Evaluation

4-1 Rating Results

Overall Rating: B

Relevance: a
Effectiveness: a
Efficiency: b
Sustainability: b

4-2 Summary of Evaluation Results

(1) Relevance

As stated in the Ten-Year Education Development Programme (PDDE) from 2002 to 2012, the Government of Niger aims, through sharing responsibility with communities, to attain sustainable development and regards community participation as one of key elements. The two target regions (Tahoua and Zinder) had relatively lower educational indicators in Niger and were in greater need of educational development. In addition, Japan places importance on the "improvement of management of education" in the Basic Education for Growth Initiative (BEGIN) declared in 2002. Since the project has been highly relevant with the Nigerien Government policies for educational development, development needs in Niger as well as Japan's foreign aid policy, the relevance of the project is high.

(2) Effectiveness

A model for school-based management with community participation through COGESs was reinforced. So the project purpose was mostly achieved. Specifically, COGESs were set up through democratic election and managed by elected members, and school activity plans approved at commune meetings were implemented accordingly. However, the strengthening of monitoring capacity and establishment of efficient monitoring system of COGES communes – later renamed FCCs - was not achieved even with a seven-month extension of the period of cooperation. Phase 2 of the project was successively initiated, with a three year duration, to continue to tackle this challenge. Since this project has largely achieved its objectives, its effectiveness is high.

(3) Efficiency

The original project purpose was modified because it was judged as "already achieved" in the mid-term review, and some modifications on the project purpose and outputs were made in the project design matrix (PDM). According to these modifications, a series of input components were duly created, and the final project purpose was mostly achieved. However, a newly added output (the formation of functional FCCs) turned out to be quite difficult, and thus, even with a seven-month extension of the period of cooperation, it was not achieved. Since total period of cooperation was insufficient to attain the outputs (and the project purpose) that were modified at the time of the mid-term review, the efficiency of the project is fair.

(4) Impact

Overall goal was achieved. A model for school-based management with community participation through COGES has been applied not only in the two target regions but also throughout the country. The official statistics showed that the target two regions had exceeded the national average for their increase in educational indicators such as student enrolment, student gross enrolment rate (GER), female GER, female ratio to all students, and pass rate of the final examination for the primary education certificate. Besides, there have been positive impacts in social and cultural terms, that is, empowerment of each school, networking of schools, and unity reinforcement in a community.

(5) Sustainability

Policies and regulations concerning COGESs were completed. The capacity of central government counterparts has remained at a low level, and the same is true for the education offices at the sub-national level, especially at the district or the lower level. However, it is expected that the latter will improve gradually as they continue visiting COGESs and FCCs for monitoring and supervision. The financial foundation of COGESs is relatively solid whereas the one of FCCs and the Ministry of National Education (MEN) has yet to be strengthened. As such, the project has a slight financial concern and its sustainability is fair.

4-4 Conclusion

The relevance of the project is high because it was consistent with Niger's development policy and needs as well as Japan's aid policy. The effectiveness of the project is evaluated as high; this was because the project purpose was in the majority achieved, but a new output added at the mid-term review was not achieved, although positive changes in quantitative and qualitative terms after the implementation of the project were observed in and around the schools. The efficiency of the project is fair because a newly-added output seemed quite challenging and was not achieved, even after a seven-month extension. The sustainability of the project is fair because MEN and FCCs' financial foundations for strengthening and monitoring COGESs still have plenty of room for improvement. With all the above factors considered, the overall rating of the project is evaluated as B (high).

4-5 Recommendations

Towards the counterpart organization in Niger, it is recommended that the follow-the-rule orderliness of COGESSs be monitored, and the proper document control and storage in school be informed and instructed. Towards JICA, it is recommended that FCCs' financial capacity and checkup of FFCs' function be strengthened, and the collaboration among COGESSs, FCCs and Government Bodies be strengthened.

4-6 Lessons Learned

As lessons learned from the project, the following points have been identified. First, a technical cooperation project which develops a model of a certain system or institution should desirably be designed to target broader areas. Second, when the contents and levels of the project purpose and outputs are reviewed in the course of the project, it is imperative to pay utmost attention to their levels that should be newly targeted, while taking into consideration the remaining cooperation period and volume of inputs. Third, the utilization of local NGOs would be gradually reduced towards the end of the project. Fourth, it would be advantageous in institution-building to put into a decree a provision that a thorough examination must be conducted on a periodical basis to obligate a review on the institution built.

The Kingdom of Lesotho

Ex-Post Evaluation of Japanese Grant Aid Project
"The Project for Construction of Primary Schools"

External Evaluators: Shinichi Mori, Setsuko Kanuka, IMG Inc.

1 Overview of the Project

Project Location

Tsolo Primary School, Maseru District

1.1 Background

The Government of Lesotho introduced the Free Primary Education (FPE) Programme in 2000 to provide an equal opportunity for access to education for all Lesotho citizens. The FPE's introduction significantly increased the number of pupils enrolling into the primary school system, causing a shortage of classrooms and teachers. The Government was alarmed that the shortage would result in inadequate educational provisions and a decrease in internal efficiency (i.e. the ratio of the number of pupils entering into the primary education in relation to the number of pupils completing the primary education). The construction of new educational facilities to alleviate the shortage was urgently needed, especially in the project target districts of Maseru and Berea where the population was drastically rising with the influx of economic migrants; this was as a result of rapid industrialization taking off in these districts while the surrounding districts were becoming economically worse off due to drought.

1.2 Project Outline

This objective of the project is to solve classroom shortages, increasing enrolment and improving learning environments in Maseru and Berea districts by constructing 17 primary schools all equipped with pit latrines, water supply facilities, desks, chairs, and other furniture.

Planned Amount Actual Amount		1,006 million yen 1,005 million yen
Exchange of Notes Grant Agreement		June 2004 July 2004
Executing Agency		Ministry of Education and Training (MoET)
Project Completion		February 2006
Companies Involved	Contractor	Sumitomo Mitsui Construction Co., Ltd.
	Consultant	Pacific Consultants International
Basic Design		August 2003
Detail Design		September 2004
Related Projects		At the time of the Basic Design Study many international organizations and NGOs were providing support to the Lesotho's education sector. The following are leading donors' projects in this sector, along with examples of their activities. • "Education Sector Development Program" by the World Bank (classroom construction, scholarship, and distribution of textbooks) • "Education II Project (Basic Education Improvement)" by the African Development Bank (classroom construction and training) • "Water, sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) Initiative" by UNICEF (improvement of water supplies and sanitation facilities) • "Lesotho School Feeding Programme" by the World Food Programme (provision of foods) • Irish Aid (construction of primary schools)

2 Outline of the Evaluation Study

2.1 External Evaluators

Shinichi MORI (IMG Inc.)

Setsuko KANUKA (IMG Inc.)

2.2 Duration of the Evaluation Study

Duration of the Study: October 2009－September 2010

Duration of the Field Study: January 9th 2010－January 19th 2010

2.3 Constraints during the Evaluation Study

All the project schools (except for Lancers Gap) were constructed on new sites with most of the attending pupils transferring to them from different schools in their vicinity. Given the short period of evaluation, a detailed comparison of pupils' learning environments and academic performance before and after the project was not possible since it would require extensive interviews at the schools surrounding the project schools.

3 Results of the Evaluation (Rating: A)

3.1 Relevance (Rating: a)

3.1.1 Relevance with the Lesotho Government Policies for Development

The project was in accordance with the priority of development policies of the Government of Lesotho at the time of the Basic Design Study and continued to be so at the time of the Ex-Post Evaluation.

The Government of Lesotho envisages the provision of an equitable basic education to all as a key development goal. Its constitution stipulates that Lesotho will adopt policies aimed at securing that "primary education is compulsory and available to all[1]." The FPE, which was introduced in 2000 to achieve this goal, continued to be implemented at the time of the Ex-Post Evaluation.

Lesotho Government's present objectives for its education sector were laid out in its Poverty Reduction Strategy, and in its Vision 2020 (a set of national long-term objectives to be achieved by 2020). The Poverty Reduction Strategy states that "Government is convinced that investment in appropriate education is the single most important contribution to the long-term socio-economic development of the country". In line with these objectives, the Ministry of Education and Training (MoET) developed the Lesotho Education Sector Strategic Plan (ESSP), which covers the period 2005-2015, and a Medium Term Education Sector Plan: 2009-2012 (an update for the ESSP). The Medium Term Education Sector Plan states that one of the four main priority objectives from 2009 to 2012 for this sector is to "ensure that all children have the opportunity to complete a good primary education."

The Lesotho Government's firm commitment toward the development of its education sector has continued to be demonstrated by its public spending. From 2000 to 2007, public expenditure on education was 29.8% of total government expenditure, the third highest percentage rate in the world, after Yemen (32.8%) and Oman (31.1%)[2]. For this project, the Government undertook its responsibilities such as securing land for the project schools, building temporary roads for construction sites, and installing electricity and water supply facilities.

As is stated above, improvement of primary education and its equitable provision to all were top priorities of Lesotho Government's development policy at the time of the Basic Design Study and continued to be so at the time of the Ex-Post Evaluation.

[1] Constitution of Lesotho, Section 28 (b), adopted in 1993
[2] UNDP, Human Development Report 2009

3.1.2 Relevance with Development Needs

The development needs for the construction of primary schools in the project target districts were deemed as high by the Basic Design Study, and the Ex-Post Evaluation confirmed that the conditions as stated below that brought about the needs for the schools in the districts were still relevant.

(1) Population growth: the population increased in the target districts partly as a consequence of the combination of a rapid industrialization of Maseru and Berea while the surrounding districts were becoming economically worse off due to drought, thus causing an influx of economic migrants into Maseru and Berea.

(2) Increases in enrolment to primary education: the number of pupils enrolling into primary education drastically increased with the introduction of the FPE.

The resulting requirements from these conditions at the time of the Basic Design Study were that a total of 450 classrooms needed to be constructed in these districts to match the number of pupils and alleviate overcrowding, as the average pupil to room ratios were 59.5:1 in Maseru and 59.7:1 in Berea, much higher than the MoET's goal of 40:1.

The population growth in the two districts where the project schools were constructed was high between 1996 and 2006, whereas all the other districts except for Mokhotlong marked a decline in population over the same period (Table 1).

Table 1 Population Growth in Maseru and Berea Districts (1996-2006)

District	Total		Growth Rate (1996 -2006)
	1996	2006	
Maseru	393,154	429,643	9.28%
Berea	241,946	256,496	6.01%

Source: Bureau of Statistics, Lesotho (modified by Ex-Post Evaluation team)

The population growth shown in the table above is not as drastic as what was estimated in the Basic Design Study, where it was 24.21% for Maseru and 23.47% for Berea between 1996 and 2001, but the fact that the population was growing in these districts while it was declining in others is a significant detail.

The enrolment drastically increased[3] in 2000 when the FPE was introduced and since then the number of pupils enrolling into primary education has remained high.

[3] Enrollment has reached its highest in 2003 and has slightly declined since. MoET has yet to fully understand the cause of the decline.

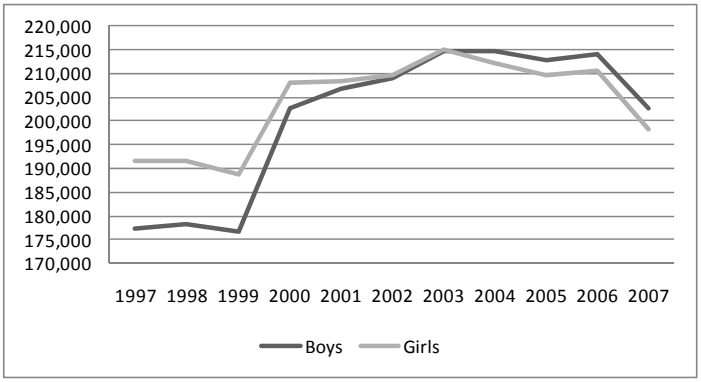

Figure 1 Number of Pupils Enrolling in Primary Education by Sex (1997-2007)

Source: Bureau of Statistic, Lesotho

The net enrolment rate drastically increased from 57% in 1999 to 78% in 2000, but it slightly declined since 2004 and dropped to 72% in 2006[4]. This slight decline was due to the fact that many children enrolled in school later than when they were supposed to and some of the students in the post FPE enrollment bulge moved out of the official primary school age bracket[5].

The Ex-Post Evaluation found that while the needs for construction of primary schools were high due to the reasons explained above, 16 out of the 17 project schools have not only been used for primary education as originally intended but also for pre-schools (called "reception classes" in Lesotho) and secondary education.

As of January 2010, only one out of the 17 project schools used its facilities solely for primary education; 13 schools had reception classes, and 10 schools were sharing their buildings between primary and secondary schools (called "combined schools"). Table 2 shows how each site uses its facilities.

The Lesotho Government has a policy to have reception classes within its primary schools in order to improve access to education, develop equality of opportunity and enhance the quality of education. The need for reception classes is due in part to the increase in the number of orphans and child-headed households, caused by the prevalence of HIV/AIDS. In Lesotho, 23.2% of the adults aged between 15 and 49 were infected with HIV/AIDS in 2007, the third highest prevalence rate in the world[6]. According to MoET statistics, 28% of children who enrolled in primary schools in 2007 had lost either one or both parents[7]. The reception classes allow

[4] UN Data
[5] World Bank, Implementation completion and Results Report (IDA-38130) on a Credit in the Amount of SDR 15.3 Million to the Kingdom of Lesotho for a Second Education Sector Development Project (Phase 2) in Support of the Second Phase of the Education Sector Program, Report No: ICR 00001110, June 29, 2009, p.10
[6] National AIDS Commission, <http://www.nas.org.ls/hivaids/default.php>
[7] According to education statistics (2007), the total number of pupils enrolled in primary education is 400,934, of which 26,709 pupils (6.7%) have lost both their parents, 22,481pupils (5.6%) have lost their mother and 62,145 pupils (15.5%) have lost their father.

orphans taking care of younger brothers and sisters to attend primary school and to benefit from the school feeding programme provided by the Government.

Table 2 Usage of School Facilities for Reception Classes and/or Secondary Schools (As of January 2010)

School Name	No. of Primary School Classrooms (Planned)	No. of Primary School Classrooms (Actual)	No. of Primary School Classrooms Used for Secondary Schools	No. of Primary School Classrooms Used for Reception Classrooms	No. of Staff Rooms Used for Classrooms
Mahlabatheng	13	8	5	1	1
Ikaheng	15	8	7	1	1
Tlhakanelo	7	5	3	0	1
Senyotong	10	8	0	1	0
Maseru East	15	7	0	0	0
Lesiea	10	7	3	1	1
Makola	12	8	5	0	1
Leqele	19	11	6	2	0
Rasetimela	24	18	4	2	0
Ntjabane	11	11	0	1	1
Baroana	7	7	0	1	1
Ramaqhanyaane	13	7	5	1	0
Phthiatsana	21	13	8	0	0
Tsoelopale-'Moho	15	14	0	1	0
Tsolo	11	11	0	0	0
Lenono	7	7	0	1	1
Lancers Gap	19	10	9	0	0

Source: Ex-Post Evaluation team

The reason why some classrooms were used for secondary schools is that the FPE significantly increased the number of pupils completing primary education and entering secondary school, which increased the needs for secondary schools. As Table 3 shows, both gross and net enrolment rates for secondary school students steadily and significantly increased in the last decade.

Table 3 Net and Gross Enrolment of Secondary Education

	Net Enrolment Rate (%)			Gross Enrolment Rate (%)		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	25.5	35.4	30.4	12.8	22.3	17.5
2004	32.2	41.5	36.8	18.5	29.0	23.7
2009	39.7	55.7	47.6	23.8	39.4	31.5

Source: Lesotho Education Statistics

At many of the combined schools, additional buildings for secondary education were under construction with the support of other donors such as the African Development Bank. The Japanese Government also supports the construction of secondary schools in Lesotho, with an

Exchange of Notes for Grant Aid being signed on March 2008 to construct one school in seven out of the ten districts[8].

Although it was not intended in the Basic Design Study that the facilities would also be used for secondary education and reception classes, the Ex-Post Evaluation team considered that it was a practical solution and necessary action to respond to the imminent need of alleviating congestion of secondary schools (which is even more serious than that of primary schools) and enabling children of vulnerable households to attend primary schools.

As discussed above, the development needs for the construction of primary schools in the target districts were deemed as high at the time of the Basic Design Study and continued to be so at the time of Ex-Post Evaluation.

3.1.3 Relevance with Japan's ODA policy

Supporting the improvement of access to education and educational environments in Lesotho continued to be in line with the Japanese Government's aid policies at the time of this Ex-Post Evaluation.

In both the Official Development Assistance (ODA) Charter (2003) and the Medium Term Policy on ODA (2005), which form the policy basis for Japanese development cooperation, Japan places priority on education as an important sector to be supported. It identifies the support for the education sector as a main priority under its poverty reduction policy.

In 2002, Japan announced "Basic Education for Growth Initiative" (BEGIN) at the Kananaskis Summit, identifying its strategy to support basic education in developing countries, giving due consideration to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the Education for All (EFA) - Dakar Framework for Action, both of which were adopted globally in 2000. For BEGIN Japan pledged over 250 billion yen in assistance for education to be provided for low-income countries over five years (starting in 2002)[9].

Japan's commitment toward improving Africa's educational sector has clearly been demonstrated by its proactive contributions, outlined in a series of Tokyo International Conference on Africa Development (TICAD) beginning with TICAD I in 1993. TICAD II took place in 1998 and TICAD III in 2003 (the same year as the Basic Design Study). In TICAD IV in 2008 Japan reiterated the importance of improving access to basic education in Africa and committed itself to construct 1,000 primary/secondary schools (approximately 5,500 classrooms in total) there.

[8] In the project for construction of secondary schools, six classrooms, an integrated science laboratory / ICT training room building, staff room building, combined toilets (17 booths) a principal's house and staff houses were constructed at each school. Source: Japanese ODA Projects, the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs Website, <http://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/gaiko/oda/data/gaiyou/odaproject/africa/lesotho/contents_01.html#m011902>

[9] Supporting the Joy: Japan's Support for Education of Leaning, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

As discussed above, the support to improve access to education and educational environments in Lesotho was in line with the Japanese Government's aid policies at the time of the Basic Design Study and continued to be so at the time of the Ex-Post Evaluation.

In light of the above, this project has been highly relevant with the Lesotho Government policies for educational development, the development needs in Lesotho as well as Japan's ODA policy; therefore its relevance is high.

3.2 Efficiency (Rating: a)

3.2.1 Project Outputs

Seventeen primary schools (229 classrooms) were constructed according to plan, except for the construction of 28 latrine buildings (Table 4). In the time between the Basic Design Study and the detailed design study, the prices of construction materials significantly increased in Lesotho. In order to reduce costs, it was agreed that the Lesotho Government would take the responsibility for the construction of 28 latrine buildings at 10 of the schools.

Table 4 Comparison of Planned and Actual Facilities Constructed by Japan

	Primary School	Class-rooms	Principal's Room	Staff Room	Storage Room	Latrine Building (for pupils)	Latrine Building (for staff)	Water Facility
Planned	17	229	17	17	17	62	17	17
Actual	17	229	17	17	17	34	17	17

Source: Ex-Post Evaluation team

The Ex-Post Evaluation team confirmed that the construction of these 28 latrine buildings had not been fully completed[10]. For example, it was observed that since 2007 the construction of a latrine building has been left unfinished in Rasetimela. Furthermore, the construction of additional secondary school buildings on the same premises as project primary schools were not necessarily accompanied by the construction of more latrine buildings. As a result, there is a serious shortage of pit latrines at the combined schools.

It was confirmed through the interview with MoET and visits to the project sites by the Ex-Post Evaluation team that the design standards at all the 17 primary schools conformed to Lesotho national building standards and regulations, and there were no major construction faults common to all project schools. According to the school principals and the school management committees of Baroana, Makole and Mahlabatheng Primary Schools, the pit latrines in the latrine buildings constructed by Japan overflow when it rains. Water leakage from the classroom

[10] Since the secondary schools have been constructed on the same premises as the project primary schools, it was not clear which latrine buildings were constructed for which school and how many more latrine buildings are to be built. Most of the records for the construction of latrine buildings undertaken by the Lesotho Government have been lost upon the recent departure of several staff in MoET's Education Facility Unit.

ceiling was reported at Ikaheng, Phuthiatsana and Lancers Gap and water leakage from latrine buildings' water tanks was also reported at Makole, Ntjabane and Mahlabatheng.

3.2.2 Project Inputs

3.2.2.1 Project period

The project schools were handed over 21 months after the exchange of notes was signed. As the actual design and construction period (21 months) slightly exceeded the period planned in the Basic Design Study (19 months), it was implemented close to the planned schedule (111% of the planned period). The delay in the project period was caused by an external factor; the bidding process took more time than planned because the first round of the bidding turned out to be a failure.

3.2.2.2 Project cost

The planned amount for this project was 1,006 million yen[11] and the actual amount spent was 1,005 million yen (99.9% of the planned amount); therefore, in terms of costs, the project was conducted as planned.

The general impression expressed by MoET in relation to the cost of the project was that the construction costs of individual classrooms in this project were higher than the costs at other donors' projects. However, a survey by JICA's Basic Design Study team for the Secondary School Construction Project in Lesotho (undertaken subsequently to this project) concluded that the direct construction costs of the primary schools in this project, which exclude indirect costs (e.g. supervisory services paid to Japanese consultants, salaries and per diem paid to Japanese contractor's employees), were 32,400 yen/m^2. As the average cost for the construction of primary schools undertaken by the Lesotho Government has been 31,433 yen/m^2, the cost of the project is deemed as appropriate[12].

In summary, although the actual construction period slightly exceeded the planned period and the latrine building construction (for which the responsibility was handed over to the Lesotho Government) was not fully completed, they are judged to have been caused by external factors and the actual cost was within the planned amount; taking all aspects of the project outputs and inputs into consideration, the Efficiency of the project is evaluated as high.

[11] The amount on the Exchange of Notes
[12] When the cost of indirect expenses (i.e. salaries for Japanese technical staff) is included, the cost performance is 46,300 yen/m2, which indicates 30% of the project cost is indirect expenses.

3.3 Effectiveness (Rating: a)

3.3.1 Quantitative Effects (Results from Operation Indicators)

According to the Basic Design Study, the primary objective of the project was that the construction of 17 schools would provide educational facilities for 11,450 children, improving their learning environment.

Photo 1 Tsolo

Photo 2 Ramaqhanyane

Photo 3 Maseru East

In order to assess the achievement levels of the set objectives, the planned and the actual figures on the following indicators were used for comparison.

(1) Enrolment
(2) Pupil to classroom ratios and average square meters per pupil in classrooms
(3) Pupil to teacher ratio[13]

(1) Enrolment

The expected total number of primary school pupils to enroll in the project schools was 11,450. MoET made the decision to transform some of the primary schools into "combined schools" with a view to accommodating increasing numbers of secondary education students (see "3.1 Relevance"). As a result, 55 classrooms from 10 project schools were being used for secondary education. In addition, 13 schools were using one or two classrooms for "reception classes" in order to alleviate the burden on school aged children (especially orphans) who must take care of young brothers and sisters. Table 5 shows the planned and the actual enrolment at the 17 project schools as well as their current and prospective occupancy rates. As of 2009, a total of 13,197 children enrolled into the project schools (8,459 pupils at primary level, 4,234 students at secondary level and 504 children to reception classes), exceeding the planned number of 11,450 although the 13,197 did include children attending reception classes and secondary level.

Out of the seven schools that were solely used for primary education (and for reception classes), five schools have reached an occupancy rate of over 90% and one has the prospect of reaching the same occupancy level in the near future. The occupancy rate of the remaining one primary school (Senyotong in Berea) is projected to remain low; according to the school principal, it is

[13] The pupil to student ratio has been added by the Ex-Post Evaluation team to assess the project's effects; it was not one of the indicators set in the Basic Design Study.

because the school is not fully operational as a half of the school's teachers were/are chronically ill. The current or prospective occupancy rates of all of the combined schools are high (at approximately 90% or higher), therefore except for Senyontong all the projects schools are deemed to be in effective use.

Table 5 Enrolment and Occupancy Rates of the 17 Primary Schools

	Name of Primary Schools	Planned Enrolement	Enrolement in Primary Classes	Occupancy Rate	Enrolement in Reception Classes	Enrolement in Secondary Classes	Combined Occupancy Rate	Effectiveness as of 2009	Annual Growth in the Number of Students (2007-2009)	Effectiveness (Prospect)
1	Mahlabatheng	650	438	67%	40	328	124%	High (Comb)	12%	
2	Ikaheng	750	308	41%	20	275	80%		11%	High (Comb)
3	Tlhakanelo	350	174	50%	12	443	180%	High (Comb)	35%	
5	Senyotong	500	233	47%	30	0	53%		6%	Low (Prim)
6	Maseru East	750	418	56%	38	0	61%		65%	High (Prim)
8	Lesiea	500	903	181%	45	394	268%	High (Comb)	19%	
10	Makola	600	340	57%	0	417	126%	High (Comb)	29%	
11	Leqele	950	760	80%	70	758	167%	High (Comb)	24%	
12	Rasetimela	1,200	894	75%	71	491	121%	High (Comb)	14%	
13	Ntjabane	550	661	120%	45	0	128%	High (Prim)	9%	
14	Baroana	350	342	98%	34	0	107%	High (Prim)	4%	
15	Ramaqhanyaane	650	184	28%	28	298	78%		14%	High (Comb)
16	Phthiatsana	1,050	500	48%	0	427	88%	High (Comb)	1%	
17	Tsoelopale-'Moho	750	690	92%	45	0	98%	High (Prim)	-1%	
18	Tsolo	550	861	157%	0	0	157%	High (Prim)	7%	
19	Lenono	350	370	106%	26	0	113%	High (Prim)	25%	
20	Lancers Gap	950	473	50%	0	403	92%	High (Comb)	22%	
	Total	11,450	8,549	75%	504	4,234	116%			

Remarks: Occupancy rates do not necessarily indicate the congestion level of the schools since additional classrooms have been constructed at some of the combined schools.
Comb: combined schools; Prim: primary education only

Source: MoET, Ex-Post Evaluation team

(2) Pupil to classroom ratios and average square meters per pupil in classrooms

Pupil to classroom ratios and average square meters per pupil in classrooms are indicators for assessing the improvement of a learning environment. Table 6 indicates: the number of pupils per classroom; the average square meters per pupil in a classroom among the schools located in the vicinity of the project sites[14] in 2002; the projected figures in the same area in 2006; and the confirmed figures for the project schools (recorded at the time of the Ex-Post Evaluation).

Table 6 Pupil to Classroom Ratios and Average Square Meters per Pupil in Classrooms

		Basic Design Study (Schools Located in the Areas Surrounding Project School Sites)		Ex-Post Evaluation (Project Schools)
		2002 (Pre-Project)	2006(Post-Project: Including Project Schools)	2009 (Actual)
Pupil/Classroom Ratio	Maseru	59.46	53.02	56.65*
	Berea	59.74	54.33	47.29*
Average m^2 per Pupil in a Classroom	Maseru	1.08m^2	1.21m^2	1.13m^2**
	Berea	1.07m^2	1.18m^2	1.35m^2**

Source: Ex-post evaluation team

* The number of pupils enrolled in primary education at the project school in the target district divided by the number of classrooms used for primary education at the project schools in the target districts
**The number of classrooms used for primary education at the project schools in the target districts multiplied by classroom area (64.0 m^2) divided by the number of pupils enrolled in primary education at the project schools in the target districts[15]

[14] The range for surrounding area is set as 3km for rural area and 2km for urban areas.
[15] Basic Design Study Summary, Basic Design Study Report (Attachment A-8-2)

As shown in the table, the actual figures did not reach the planned figures in Maseru, but the pupil to classroom ratio has decreased and the average square meters per pupil in classrooms have increased compared to those of surrounding schools in 2002. In Berea, the goal was achieved where the actual figure reached the planned figures.

(3) Pupil to teacher ratio

The average number of pupils per teacher at the project schools was 44.07 at the time of the Ex-Post Evaluation, which is lower than the 49.11 average pupils recorded (at the time of the Basic Design Study) within 53 schools surrounding the project sites. According to MoET and the principals, the project schools attract qualified teachers who are seeking for better working environment.

The project has contributed to an improvement of the learning environments, as in the project schools (compared to the surrounding schools' statistics taken before the project was implemented): the pupil to classroom ratio has decreased; the average square meters per pupil in a classroom has increased; and pupil to teacher ratio has decreased.

3.3.2 Qualitative Effects

Interviews with principals and teachers at the project schools verified that the project had improved the learning environments for pupils, leading to the improvements in students' academic performances[16]. According to observations made by teachers, being released from congested classrooms with insufficient furniture (many pupils in congested schools are obliged to sit on the floor) had meant that pupils were now able to concentrate more on their classes and that teachers had less difficulty in drawing their pupils' attention. The overall dropout rate of the 17 schools was 3% in 2009 according to the Ex-Post Evaluation team's interviews, which was lower than the national dropout rate of 6% (2005)[17].

In addition to improving access to primary education and improving learning environments by constructing classrooms, the Basic Design Study listed the following direct effects of the project.

(1) A water supply facility would provide safe water for 11,450 pupils and their teachers.

(2) A principal's room and a staff room would establish a basis for school management and operation by providing spaces conducive for: managing a school, preparing for classes, marking exams, and exchanging information with fellow teachers.

[16] The improvement of students' academic performances was not foreseen by the Basic Design Study, but was confirmed as an indirect project effect by the Ex-Post Evaluation.
[17] 2006 Statistical bulletin, MoET

(3) Latrine buildings with hand washing water taps attached or provided nearby would improve hygiene and sanitary conditions in schools by promoting overall education in these areas and increasing pupils' hand-washing practices.

Photo 4 Pit Latrine

Photo 5 Pit Latrine Buildings

Photo 6 Well

Provision of safe water has been achieved as planned by the construction of water supply facilities at all the 17 schools.

To establish a basis for school management and operation, a principal's room and a staff room were constructed as planned at all the 17 schools, however seven out of the 17 schools use their staff rooms as classrooms since there were an insufficient number of classrooms as they were also used by reception classes and secondary school. Principals' rooms were used as intended at all the schools, but were shared by secondary school principals at the combined schools.

In all primary schools in Lesotho public hygiene and sanitation education has been conducted as a part of the regular teaching program, so teachers are instructed to teach pupils to wash their hands after using the toilets and before eating. Many schools have found it difficult to manage and maintain their water taps attached to the latrine building (refer to "3.5 Sustainability"), while the taps located closer to the classroom buildings were being used and hand washing was being practiced by pupils. Construction of water supply facilities has made it possible for pupils to practice what they have learnt about hygiene in the classroom and has improved hygiene and sanitary conditions at the schools.

This project has largely achieved its objectives; therefore its effectiveness is high.

3.4 Impact

3.4.1 Intended Effects

The Basic Design Study projected that the project would encourage parents who live within a reasonable traveling distance of the schools to be more interested in educational matters, which would result in revitalization of the parents' associations and community activities at schools. It was found that although most of the schools allowed their classrooms to be used for community

activities (including church services); there had been no major interactions between the schools and the surrounding communities, except for at one school –Ntjabane[18].

Quantitative data that indicates impacts upon schools in the vicinity of the project schools could not be obtained. According to principals and teachers at the project schools, the project has alleviated the congestion in other schools since most of the pupils enrolled in the project schools have transferred from other schools in the vicinity.

3.4.2 Other Impacts

Since the FPE provides free meals to children, jobs for three to five cooks per school have been created. A night watchman has also been employed at each school. A significant volume of employment was created during the construction of the schools, with local contractors being hired who simultaneously obtained new technologies and quality control measures from Japanese contractors.

Neither relocation of residents nor land acquisition was needed for this project and there was no perceivable environmental impact caused by the construction of the schools.

3.5 Sustainability (Rating: b)

3.5.1 Structural Aspects of Operation and Maintenance

In terms of school management and maintenance the following task assignments were laid out in the Basic Design Study.

- School management committees: assistance in maintenance activities, monitoring, and management of the school
- Schools: school management, implementation of regular inspection, and maintenance of school facilities and water supply equipment
- MoET: securing the necessary number of teachers, management and maintenance of school facilities, and monitoring of school management through the District Field Inspectorate
- Parents and communities: provision of labor for school maintenance activities

There are two main issues regarding organizational sustainability, which has resulted in the current situation where appropriate and timely maintenance measures have failed to be undertaken. The first is with the school management committees, due to a gap between the roles they were expected to play and the roles that they have played. The second is with the Ministry, due to inefficient distribution of responsibilities in terms of facility maintenance.

[18] At Ntjabane, parents constructed a garden and a house to exhibit cultural artifacts in the school premises.

(1) School management committee

The tasks assigned to school management committees were to assist schools in maintenance activities, while also monitoring and managing schools. School management committees were active in most of the project schools but their roles were limited to the managerial issues relating to pupils, parents and teachers, and they were not capable of providing effective solutions for a school's maintenance problems. The Basic Design Study recommended that the committees perform the role of a bridge between schools and communities by actively seeking community involvement in school maintenance, thereby raising a sense of communal ownership of the project schools and nurturing a community's interest in educational matters; however, only a few recognize that the role of community mobilization was their responsibility and even fewer have successfully carried it out.

(2) Ministry of Education and Training

The tasks assigned to MoET include: conducting regular monitoring to ensure that the facilities are properly maintained; providing advice to the schools; and allocating sufficient human and financial resources required for managing the schools and maintaining the facilities. The Ex-Post Evaluation team discerned that monitoring was being conducted regularly and advice was being offered accordingly, but the organizational arrangements for allocating financial resources to be used for maintenance were not fully functioning.

At the Ministry level, the CEO (Chief Education Officer) Primary has the most authority over budgetary matters for primary education. Under the CEO Primary, school inspectorates conduct regular school monitoring. As of January 2010, there were 34 school inspectors in ten districts to monitor all private and government schools (approx. 1,500 primary schools). These inspectors visit schools periodically, discuss pedagogical and administrative issues with school staff and compile a report on these which is submitted to the Chief Inspectorate.

The Ex-Post Evaluation team gathered that the primary responsibility, in all the government schools (200 primary schools and 95 secondary schools), for the administrative issues including those related to maintenance rested not only with the CEO Primary but also with the CEO Teaching Services[19].

When a maintenance problem occurs that is beyond the capacity of a government school or a school management committee, a Supervisor under CEO Teaching Services[20] is required to

[19] Although there was no official document clearly stipulating the division of responsibilities between the two departments, this was confirmed by the interviews with both CEO Primary and CEO Teaching Services, and by the Ex-Post Evaluation's wrap-up meeting with MoET chaired by the Principal Secretary of the Ministry. According to CEO Teaching Services insistence, since CEO Primary has the information on, and the budget for, all primary schools it should be primarily responsible for the maintenance of primary schools.

[20] There are only two Supervisor's positions and one of them was vacant at the time of the Ex-Post Evaluation.

collect information from inspectors and make a proposal to CEO Primary in order to solve the problem. Upon submission of a proposal, the CEO Primary will seek a financial source outside the set annual budget for maintenance finances (Utility Fund - allocated to all primary schools) to address the problem.

The dysfunctional division of responsibilities between the two departments, i.e. information and budget rest with CEO Primary while the responsibility for maintenance rests with CEO Teaching Services, causes institutional inefficiency. Supervisors never submit any proposals and most of the maintenance problems of the government primary schools are not solved at Ministry level.

In addition to the tasks related to maintenance, securing the appropriate number of teachers is also one of MoET's responsibilities. At the time of the Ex-Post Evaluation 194 teachers were assigned at the 17 project schools, of which 95% were qualified teachers[21]. Most of the unqualified teachers were already enrolled in the Distance Teacher Education Programme (DTEP)[22], at the end of which they will become qualified teachers. The average pupil to teacher ratio at the 17 schools was 44:1 in 2009, which is slightly higher than the national average of 41:1 in 2006, but is significantly lower than 49:1 the average for the 53 schools in the vicinity of project sites in 2002[23]. Since the national average of the percentage of unqualified /under-qualified teachers was approximately 40%, teachers placed at the project schools are of a higher standard.

3.5.2 Technical Aspects of Operation and Maintenance

A technical guidance manual for inspection and maintenance of facilities was provided to all the project schools at the time of handover and regular maintenance procedures for most of a school's facilities do not require any specific technical skills beyond a teacher's capabilities, except for that of wells. The Ex-Post Evaluation team found that none of the schools were following the guidance of preventive/regular maintenance of the wells, partly due to lack of funds and partly due to technical difficulty.

[21] The percentage of unqualified teachers in the nation was 30% at the time of the Project's Basic Design Study.
[22] DTEP is a four-year program for unqualified and under-qualified teachers. Through DTEP, 447 teachers became qualified in 2006, 316 in 2007, and 437 in 2008. As of 2009, over 2,216 teachers were taking DTEP courses. (Source: World Bank, Implementation completion and Results Report (IDA-38130) on a Credit in the Amount of SDR 15.3 Million to the Kingdom of Lesotho for a Second Education Sector Development Project (Phase 2) in Support of the Second Phase of the Education Sector Program, Report No: ICR 00001110, June 29, 2009). As stated in the Basic Design Study DTEP planned to produce 500 qualified teachers in 2006 and 250 in 2007, DTEP was implemented as planned. According to MoET statistics, the number of unqualified teachers was 4,227 out of a total of 10,428 teachers (42%) in 2006. One thousand one hundred ninety four (1,194) teachers became newly qualified from 2006 to 2008 through DTEP although the percentage of unqualified teachers has almost remained the same since the Basic Design Study, as the number of qualified teachers decreased while the number of un-qualified teachers has increased.
[23] The national average of the teacher to student ratio was 47:1 in 2002 when the Basic Design Study was conducted.

3.5.3 Financial Aspects of Operation and Maintenance

According to the Basic Design Study, MoET prioritizes government schools over other schools in budget allocation and has the policy that the Government would bear the entire running and maintenance costs for all government schools. As the necessary operational expenses for project schools are minimal it is within the Government's financial capabilities (and responsibility) to provide funding for them, as was laid out in the Basic Design Study. At the time of the Ex-Post Evaluation a very limited level of maintenance activities were being conducted by the schools, due partially to a lack of funds allocated for maintenance caused by the ineffective distribution of responsibilities within the Ministry.

The FPE uniformly, as of 2009, provides all schools with salaries for teachers, stationery, and textbooks, as well as the "Utility Fund," a maintenance and operation expense of 8 Maloti[24] per pupil per year[25]. The eight schools that are connected to piped water (Water and Sanitation Authority: WASA) have to pay at least 4 to 5 Maloti per pupil as a water fee out of this Utility Fund. After these schools conduct minor maintenance jobs, such as repair of door knobs/locks or windows, there are usually no funds left for the pumping up of excreta from the pit latrines (5,000 Maloti every 4-6 years). Other major maintenance requirements, such as reinforcement/ repainting of roofs to stop or prevent water leakage, replacement of broken doors, and painting of columns on the exterior of classrooms, are totally beyond their budget capacity. In most combined schools, secondary schools cover the expenses that cannot be covered by the Utility Fund, such as water bills and collection of excreta. Although the Basic Design Study stated that the maintenance cost of water supply facilities would be paid directly by MoET, not from the Utility Fund, the actual practice is that the maintenance of water supply facilities is paid from the Utility Fund, which places a great burden on project schools' maintenance budget. Furthermore, since a larger number of pupils than planned in the Basic Design Study are currently using the pit latrines at the project schools (more prominent in the combined schools), the schools are facing the necessity to pump out excreta at a greater frequency than what was projected in the Basic Design Study.

The FPE prohibits all primary schools (both private and government) from collecting any fees from parents, so schools are obliged to raise funds by selling sweets, organizing concerts or by renting out classrooms during weekends to community people and churches. According to school principals, since the introduction of the FPE, parents have come to consider that all school expenses should be covered by the Government and thus they are generally not willing to contribute anything toward school maintenance.

[24] The Utility Fund was set as 5 Maloti per child per year during the Basic Design.
[25] MoET provides a subvention fund to a school when its budget permits. The use of this additional fund is the responsibility of each school. The project schools that have received the fund have used it to purchase sports' uniforms or to repair windows, but have not used it to maintain water supply facilities.

3.5.4 Current Status of Operation and Maintenance

(1) Classroom buildings

All rooms are cleaned by pupils on a daily basis under the supervision of teachers. All the schools once a year check and record an inventory of all the furniture and equipment, and report it to back to MoET in accordance with the Government's regulations. No major loss of equipment due to insufficient supervision has been reported so far. At all the project schools it was commented that door locks and knobs were easily broken, and the Ex-Post Evaluation team actually observed broken locks and knobs at most project schools. This may have been caused by the use of cheap materials. It was said in the contractor's report (submitted after the project's construction) that "door locks and knobs are sold in a local market and can be purchased easily; therefore if they were broken it would be possible for the schools to repair or replace them by themselves". However, as project schools do not have sufficient budget for maintenance they are unable to replace them.

(2) Latrine buildings and water supply facilities

According to the schools' principals the latrine buildings are cleaned at least once a week. All project schools are supposed to be equipped with a sufficient number of latrine buildings and a water supply facility, but (as discussed in "3.2 Efficiency") there is a serious shortage of toilets because 28 latrine buildings (at 10 schools, of which the construction was to be undertaken by MoET) were either used by secondary schools or not constructed. According to the Basic Design Study, the pupils' pit latrines would fill up every 8 years and the teachers' pit latrines filling up every 11 years. It has only been four years since the schools were constructed: one school (Lesiea) has already had excreta collected; the pit latrines of two schools (Maseru East and Tsoelopele-'Moho) have already filled up but the schools have been unable to have excreta collected due to a lack of available funds; and four schools' pit latrines have almost filled up but the schools have not secured funds for collection (Ikaheng, Leqele, Ntjabane, and Phuthiatsana). Overall, the condition of the toilets in many of the schools was filthy since they were used by more pupils than originally planned for, and discipline, attention, and care needed to keep them clean were absent at these schools. The majority of the schools have lost a multiple number of toilet seats (some were stolen and some intentionally broken), many toilet doors were broken either by intruders or by children, and some of the toilets were completely out of use because of water/waste over-flowing from the latrine pit holes - apparently caused by them being placed in an inappropriate location.

Almost all water taps installed in the toilet buildings were broken by intruders/children and are now out of use. However, in order to avoid pupils wasting water, the schools do not repair these taps and, at most project schools, children now fetch water from other functioning water taps

(all the schools have at least one water tap functioning) by bucket. School principals prefer that all water taps be kept under a teacher's strict control, in order to minimize wastage. Toilet buildings are usually not located close to the classrooms, thus monitoring of taps is difficult; so installation of water taps in the latrine buildings has under these circumstances been deemed to be unnecessary.

As none of the schools were following the guidance of preventive/regular maintenance of the wells (see "3.5.2 Technical Aspects of Operation and Maintenance"), some wells became dysfunctional. At Baroana Primary School, it was reported that students brought water from surrounding villages and dag a spring on their own since a handle of the well pump had broken.

Some problems have been observed in terms of the organizational, financial and technical aspects of sustainability in this project; therefore the sustainability of the project is fair.

4 Conclusion, Recommendations and Lessons Learned

4.1 Conclusion

The relevance of the project has been evaluated as high because the construction of primary school classrooms and improvements in the learning environments are in line with the Lesotho Government's development policy and Japanese Government's aid policy, while meeting the needs of local population. Although the use of classrooms not only for primary education but also for reception classes and secondary education was not intended in the project, this application is considered as a practical solution in response to the imminent needs of the local population. The efficiency of the project has been evaluated as high, considering that although the actual construction period slightly exceeded the planned period and the latrine building construction (for which the responsibility was handed over to the Lesotho Government) was not fully completed, they are judged to have been caused by external factors and the actual cost was within the planned amount. The effectiveness of the project has been evaluated as high since the current or prospective occupancy rates of all of the schools except for one are high (approximately or over 90%) and the learning environment including sanitary and hygienic conditions has improved. Some other positive impacts were reported, such as the alleviation of congestion at schools located in the surrounding areas and creation of job opportunities for some members of the local community. The sustainability of the project has been evaluated as fair because some water supply facilities and pit latrine buildings have not been well maintained due to insufficient financial resources.

In light of the above, this project is evaluated to be (A) highly satisfactory.

4.2 Recommendations

4.2.1 Recommendations to the Executing Agency

(1) Structural sustainability

(a) School management committees

School management committees have been established as planned and are in active operation, although the majority of them have not fulfilled a function recommended in the Basic Design Study - a bridge between schools and communities. Most of the schools have not successfully integrated into the community, which could constitute a reason for why these schools have been subjected to intrusions or vandalism. Although classrooms are open to the communities during weekends, many principals were not interested in creating strong ties between communities and the schools. Some of these intrusions could be avoided if the communities surrounding the schools had more interest and gave attention toward the schools. Therefore, MoET should compile a set of best practices for interactions between schools and communities, and disseminate them nationwide.

(b) Ministry of Education and Training

Information and budget regarding the operation and maintenance of primary schools rest with the CEO Primary while the responsibility of maintenance rests with the Supervisor under CEO Teaching Services. MoET should re-examine the maintenance regime for the primary schools in order to overcome this institutional deficiency.

(2) Technical and financial sustainability

As operational and maintenance needs vary between schools, the Utility Fund (8 Maloti per pupil per year) uniformly allocated to all primary schools does not necessarily correspond to the needs of each individual primary school. Those schools that receive water from WASA have to use more than half of their Utility Fund on paying water fees and after other minor maintenance expenditures these schools cannot pay for the pumping up of the excreta from their pit latrines (see “3.5 Sustainability”). Those schools that have their own water supply (well) may not need the same amount of the Utility Fund as others, but once the hand pump or borehole breaks down, the savings that could be accrued from their excess Utility Fund would not be sufficient to rehabilitate the equipment. There are also water leakage problems that cannot be solved technically or financially by an individual school’s own efforts. As such the Utility Fund should be limited to daily operation and maintenance (a smaller amount should be allocated to those schools that have wells), leaving major maintenance or large expenditure such as rehabilitation of wells and pumping up of excreta to be dealt with and paid for by MoET. Furthermore, as none of the project schools were following the guidance of preventive maintenance for the

wells, it is recommended that regular mechanical maintenance be conducted by a contractor on a collective basis (one contract for all schools), so that wells can be used for an extended period with minimal breakage.

The condition of the toilets in many of the schools were filthy, and some had been damaged by intruders and some damaged by pupils. Broken seats had not been replaced with new seats partially because of a lack of funding and partially because a lack of attention. The fact that a few schools were actually maintaining the pit latrines in good condition indicates that the condition of pit latrines is mostly dependent on a school's discipline and attention. The filthy condition of pit latrines discourages pupils especially girls from attending school, which will lead to a decline in enrolment. In order to raise motivation of the schools to maintain pit latrines in a proper manner, the condition of pit latrines should be inspected regularly and/or could be linked to the Utility Fund amount allocated to individual schools.

4.2.2 Recommendations to JICA

Since the physical problems with educational facilities, notably, the overflowing of pit latrines when it rains, and water leakage from the classroom ceiling and latrine buildings' water tanks, came about after the warranty period had expired, the attribution for the responsibility of these problems is not clear (see "3.2.1 Project Outputs"). If the repair of facilities is judged to be done in a cost-efficient manner, it is recommended that JICA takes remedial measures while investigating the cause of the problems.

4.3 Lessons Learned

Conformity with the generally accepted Lesotho standards does not necessarily mean that the adopted design is ideal for the local circumstances (see "3.5.4 Current Status of Operation and Maintenance"). For example, most of the water basin taps in the latrine buildings, which were constructed to conform to the generally accepted Lesotho standards, have been left broken. This is because the latrine buildings are located far from classroom buildings making it impossible for teachers to control children's use of water from the taps, so they considered that it was better to leave them broken and have children bring water in buckets from other taps closer to the classroom buildings to the latrine buildings. Another example is the wooden latrines seats, which can be commonly found in primary schools in Lesotho: many of them have already come off the concrete pits creating a filthy condition where pupils had to sit directly on concrete pits. By visiting various non-project schools the Ex-Post Evaluation team found that one type of toilet seat (a wider wooden board with a hole) was more durable and easier to clean. The lesson from the project is that when deciding specifications of accessories for the facilities, the current practices at other schools should be observed and afterwards the most adaptable and durable in the local circumstances should be adopted.

The Republic of Mali

Ex-Post Evaluation of Japanese Grant Aid Project "Project de Construction d'Ecoles Fondamentales Premier Cycle Phase II"

External Evaluators: Shinichi Mori, Setsuko Kanuka, IMG Inc.

1 Overview of the Project

Project Location

Bankoni A Primary School, Bamako

1.1 Background

Mali's primary education net enrolment rate greatly improved from 26.0% in 1989/1990 to 57.8% in 1999/00 but it still had one of the lowest rates in Sub-Saharan Africa. In the 1980s and 1990s fiscal retrenchment policies were adopted under a structural adjustment program, education budgets were restricted which severely delayed the construction of primary school facilities. Serious classroom shortages and dilapidation of the existing classrooms had become a major hindrance for Mali's education system, forcing many schools to operate a double shift system (morning and afternoon school sessions for two different groups of pupils in one school day) or a system of multiple classes (one classroom shared by more than one grade).

The Government of Mali drafted the Ten-Year Education Development Programme (Programme Décennal de Développement de l'Education: PRODEC), which aimed to enroll 95% of all children into primary education by 2010 through constructing school facilities.

1.2 Project Outline

The objective of this project is to improve access to primary education and enhancing the learning environments in Bamako District, and Koulikoro, Ségou, and Sikasso Regions, by

replacing and expanding educational facilities, distributing teaching equipment, and conducting educational activities on school maintenance, hygiene, and sanitation (soft component).

Planned Amount/Actual Amount		Stage I: 434 million yen / 429.953 million yen Stage II: 976 million yen / 973.8 million yen Stage III: 1,280 million yen / 1,138.794 million yen
Exchange of Notes (Grant Agreement)		Stage I: 24 January 2002 (23 July 2002) Stage II: 28 June 2002 (18 February 2003) Stage III: 18 June 2004 (18 June 2004)
Executing Agency		Ministry of Basic Education, Alphabetization, and National Language (MoE)
Project Completion		Stage I: 13 June 2003 Stage II: 15 March 2004 Stage III: 12 February 2006
Companies Involved	Contractor	Toda Corporation
	Consultant	Daiken Sekkei. Inc.
Basic Design Study		December 2001
Detail Design		Stage I: April 2002 Stage II: October 2002 Stage III: September 2004
Related Projects		At the time of the Basic Design Study, many international organizations, individual countries and NGOs were providing support to the Malian education sector. The following are the leading donors' projects in this sector, along with examples of their activities. • "Education Sector Expenditure Program" by the World Bank (classroom construction, teacher training, improvement in decentralized management) from 2001 to 2006 • "Basic Education Expansion Program" by the USAID/Mali-Save the Children USA (construction of community schools) 1992 – 2003 • "Support for Coordination of Education Policy" by the Canadian International Development Agency (Education policy and administrative management) 1999-2010 • "School Sanitation & Hygiene Education" by UNICEF (improvement of sanitation and hygiene) • AFD (classroom construction) • Holland (direct financial support to the Ministry to construct classrooms and a teacher training school)

2 Outline of the Evaluation Study

2.1 External Evaluators

Shinichi MORI (IMG Inc.)

Setsuko KANUKA (IMG Inc.)

2.2 Duration of the Evaluation Study

Duration of the Study: October 2009－September 2010

Duration of the Field Study: January 20th 2010－February 7th 2010

2.3 Constraints during the Evaluation Study

The project sites (88 schools) are situated in a wide range of locations (both urban and rural), in three regions and one district. Taking the short period of field evaluation into consideration, the Ex-Post Evaluation team selected 69 schools as samples[26], from which most of the qualitative information related to impact and sustainability was obtained.

The Ex-Post Evaluation team also requested quantitative data on the project schools from District Education Centers (Centre d'Animation Pédagogique: CAP), but some of them were unable to provide complete data, as after the construction of the new classrooms many of the project schools were divided into two primary schools, or gave old classrooms to other primary and/or secondary schools[27]. These administrative changes have made it difficult to assess the "before the project and after the project" quantitative differences at many of the project schools. The Ex-Post Evaluation team decided to use data deemed as reliable from 66 schools (surveyed schools) for the evaluation of effectiveness, collected from CAPs and individual schools.

3 Results of the Evaluation (Rating: B)

3.1 Relevance (Rating: a)

3.1.1 Relevance with the Malian Government Policies for Development

The Government of Mali recognizes education as a constitutional right of its citizens and identified the educational sector as one of the top priority areas within its Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) in 2002. The Ten-Year Education Development Programme from 2000 to 2010 (Programme Décennal de Développement de l'Education: PRODEC), sets the improvement in the quality of education and provision of access to education as main priorities. The program was aimed at: increasing the enrolment rate to 95% in primary education by 2010; increasing female enrolment to primary schools to 70%; solving disparity between urban and rural areas, and also between genders; and improving the overall quality of primary education. In order to achieve these goals, it planned to construct 18,000 classrooms by 2010[28].

[26] Samples were selected using "quota sampling", in which more than half of the project schools were used as models from each of the target districts. During the selection process it was ensured that some schools included were ones that had implemented the soft component.
[27] Dividing of schools and/or transferring of classrooms was observed at half of 66 surveyed schools.
[28] The number of primary schools nationwide has increased from 7,200 in 2002/2003 to 9,243 in 2007/2008 (MoE Statistics).

PRODEC has been implemented through three consecutive multi-year investment programs - the Education Sector Investment Programs (Programmes d'Investissement Sectoriel de l'Education: PISE) i.e. PISE I, II and III. Both first and second PISEs (PISE I 2001-2005, PISE II 2006-2008) had components for increasing access to education and improving the quality of education; the last PISE (PISE III 2009-2012) was still being drafted as of February 2010.

The Government's firm commitment toward the development of the education sector has continued to be demonstrated by its public spending. In 2008, the public expenditure on education was 19.5% of total government expenditure[29]. For this project, the Government undertook measures such as: securing land for the project schools; clearing existing facilities and trees blocking the construction site; setting up temporary classrooms to be used during the construction period; and securing teachers to be placed at the project locations.

As is stated above, improvement of enrolment through the construction of classrooms was given a high priority in Mali Government's national policies at the time of the Basic Design Study and continued to be so at the time of the Ex-Post Evaluation.

3.1.2 Relevance with Development Needs

As stated in "1.1 Background", in Mali, there was a serious shortage of classrooms and the most of the existing facilities were severely dilapidated, causing many schools to operate either a double shift system or a system of multiple classes. The need for construction of classrooms was urgent especially in urban areas where the situation was worsening, as population growth was high due to natural growth and an influx of migrants from rural areas. In rural areas the overall number of schools was insufficient; as a result many pupils did not attend school due to long distances between home and school.

Since primary education enrolment data in the target areas could not been obtained, it was decided to use population growth data as a representative replacement for it. The Ex-Post Evaluation confirmed that there was a drastic increase in the population in the target district and regions in the last ten years (see Table 1); the population of Bamako District had drastically increased, almost doubling in ten years.

Table 1 Population Growth of Target District and Regions (1998-2009)

District/ Region	1998	2009	% of change (1998-2009)
Bamako	1,016,296	1,809,106	78
Koulikoro	1,570,507	2,418,305	54
Ségou	1,675,357	2,336,225	39
Sikasso	1,782,157	2,625,919	47

Source: Institut National de la Statistique, Mali

[29] UNESCO, UIS Statistics in Brief

The high development needs for classroom construction can also be ascertained by the drastic increase in net and gross enrolment rates in primary education. The net enrolment rate increased from 44% in 1999 to 66% in 2007 and the gross enrolment rate increased from 56% in 1999 to 88% in 2007[30].

As demonstrated, the development needs for classroom construction was high at the target district and regions at the time of the Basic Design Study and continued to be so at the time of the Ex-Post Evaluation.

3.1.3 Relevance with Japan's ODA policy

In both the Official Development Assistance (ODA) Charter (2003), and the Medium Term Policy on ODA (2005), which form the policy basis for Japanese development cooperation, Japan places priority on education as an important sector to be supported. It identifies the support for the education sector as a main priority under its poverty reduction policy.

In 2002, Japan announced "Basic Education for Growth Initiative" (BEGIN) at the Kananaskis Summit, identifying its strategy to support basic education in developing countries, giving due consideration to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the Education for All (EFA) - Dakar Framework for Action, both of which were adopted globally in 2000. For BEGIN Japan pledged over 250 billion yen in assistance for education to be provided for low-income countries over five years (starting in 2002)[31].

Japan's commitment toward improving Africa's educational sector has clearly been demonstrated by its proactive contributions, outlined in a series of Tokyo International Conference on Africa Development (TICAD) beginning with TICAD I in 1993. TICAD II took place in 1998 and TICAD III in 2003 (the same year as the Basic Design Study). In TICAD IV in 2008 Japan reiterated the importance of improving access to basic education in Africa and committed itself to construct 1,000 primary/secondary schools there (approximately 5,500 classrooms in total).

Acknowledging the high need for primary education facilities, Japan has implemented in Mali three primary school construction projects over 10 years (FY 1997 – FY 2007). Prior to this project (Phase II) was Phase I[32], in which 562 classrooms were constructed at 104 primary schools in Bamako District, and Koulikoro, Segue, and Mopti Regions; following this project was Phase III[33], in which 303 classrooms were constructed at 68 primary schools in Koulikoro, Ségou, Sikasso, and Mopti Regions.

[30] ibid
[31] Supporting the Joy: Japan's Support for Education of Leaning, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
[32] Implementation Period; FY 1997-2000
[33] Implementation Period; FY 2006-2007

As discussed above, the support to improve access to education and educational environments in Mali were in line with the Japanese Government's aid policies at the time of the Basic Design Study and continued to be so at the time of the Ex-Post Evaluation.

In light of the above, this project has been highly relevant with the Mali Government policies for educational development, development needs in Mali as well as Japan's ODA policy; therefore the relevance of the project is high.

3.2 Efficiency (Rating: b)

3.2.1 Project Outputs

At the time of the Basic Design Study it was planned to construct 405 classrooms, 32 principal's office with storage, 115 latrine buildings (415 pit latrines). From the original plan in the Basic Design Study, the construction of a total of 27 classrooms, 5 principal's offices with storage, and 3 latrine buildings (9 pit latrines) were cancelled because it was found during the Detailed Design Study that these facilities had already been constructed (or were in the process of being constructed) by others such as parents' associations. After this revision, the project constructed (at 88 schools) 378 classrooms, 27 principal's offices with storage, and 112 latrine buildings (406 pit latrines). It also supplied school furniture (such as desks and tables) and 153 sets of educational materials (see Table 2).

Table 2 Comparison between the Planned and Actual Project Outputs

	Schools	Classrooms	Principal's Offices	Pit Latrines
Planned	91	405	32	415
Actual	88	378	27	406

Source: Basic Design Study Report and Project Completion Report

The design standards of the classroom construction conformed to Malian national building standards and regulations. It was widely recognized and acclaimed by all levels of beneficiaries including MoE's officials, principals and teachers of surveyed schools, and School Management Committee (Comité de Gestion Scolaire: CGS) members that project classrooms were of a superior quality to ones constructed by other donors and that they require minimal maintenance.

During the field visits many positive aspects of the project classrooms were pointed out by principals, teachers, CGS members and students. Ceilings and glass blocks installed in the upper side walls received the most positive comments. According to them, the project classrooms were cooler and quieter than others because the ceiling insulates the room from heat and from

the sound of rain hitting the iron roof sheets, and the classrooms also have better illumination than others because of the glass blocks[34].

There were no major defects commonly found in classroom buildings at the project schools, though three schools, Koko Plaine, Ouolofobougou C, and Kobalacoura, reported problems in the classroom buildings. It was reported that: at Koko Plaine, the floor levels in the classrooms were so low to the outside that rain water and dust encroached into the rooms; at Ouolofobougou C, rain water leaks from the ceiling in one of the classrooms; and at Kabalacoura, small bats have begun to nest in the space between the ceiling and roof - entering from a small opening at the roofs edge. According to the principal of Kabalacoura, bat excrement produces an extremely unpleasant odor which intensifies when it rains, disturbing an otherwise pleasant environment to study and work.

3.2.2 Project Inputs

3.2.2.1 Project period

The project was implemented in three Stages: Stage I (January 2002 - June 2003), Stage II (August 2002 - March 2004) and Stage III (July 2004 - February 2006)[35]. The duration of the project was longer than planned in the Basic Design Study (134% of the planned period). The table below shows the comparison between the planned and the actual construction periods.

Table 3 Comparison between the Planned and Actual Construction Periods

	Stage I		Stage II		Stage III	
	Design	Construction	Design	Construction	Design	Construction
Planned	5 months	8.5 months	4 months	12 months	4 months	12 months
Actual	6 months	12 months	7 months	13 months	7 months	13 months

Source: Basic Design Study Report and Project Completion Reports

The three month delay in Stage I was caused by the civil war in Côte d'Ivoire that erupted in September 2002. As Mali is a land locked country it uses Abidian Port in Côte d'Ivoire as its main transit port, where items for Mali are delivered by large trucks. The war disrupted the transportation of goods, delaying the delivery of construction materials for the project (an external factor). The delays in the Design periods in both Stages 2 and 3 occurred because the Malian Government needed more time for granting official permission on the Detailed Designs of the project schools than originally projected, which decreased the project's efficiency.

[34] Many glass blocks in the classroom buildings in Bamako District, constructed through Japan's preceding grant aid project (Phase I), were broken by stones thrown during strikes in the early 2000s. To prevent this, some project schools in Bamako have placed wire fence covers over the glass blocks.

[35] For all stages, the starting month is when the Detail Design Study began and the end month was when the construction was completed.

3.2.2.2 Project cost

The total project cost was 2,543 million yen, which was lower than the amount stated in the Exchange of Notes - 2,690 million yen (95% of the planned amount). MoE claimed that the buildings constructed by Japan: were more durable with a higher level of insulation, noise reduction, and daylight; did not require much repair; and provided a more comfortable learning environment for the pupils due to their superior specifications - although the cost of the classrooms was higher than that of other donors'.

Although the project cost was lower than planned, the project period was overly longer than planned; therefore the efficiency of the project is fair.

3.3 Effectiveness (Rating: a)

3.3.1 Quantitative Effects (Results from Operation Indicators)

According to the Basic Design Study, the primary objective of the project was to provide educational facilities for approximately 5,100 children and to improve their learning environments by constructing 405 classrooms (replacement of 147 classrooms and addition of 258 new classrooms) at 91 schools.

Photo 1 Koko B

Photo 2 Sansanding

Photo 3 Lafia Cimetière

In order to assess the achievement levels of the set objective, the planned and the actual figures on the following indicators were used for comparison.

(1) Enrolment
(2) Pupil to classroom ratio
(3) Number of schools where double shift and multiple classes were conducted
(4) Pupil to teacher ratio

(1) Enrolment

According to the Basic Design Study, the increased number of classrooms would be able to accommodate an additional 5,100 pupils. It was impossible to compare the enrolment of the schools before the project and after the project because (see "2.3 Constraints during the Evaluation Study") after the project's completion many project schools were divided into two primary schools or had given old classrooms to other primary and/or secondary schools.

Enrolment in the target district and regions has been growing steadily, as shown in Table 4.

Table 4 Increase in Enrolment in Primary Education at the Target District and Regions

District / Region	2002/03			2007/08			Change (%) (2002/03 – 2007/08)		
	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls
Bamako	233,841	119,858	113,983	291,364	146,994	144,370	25	23	27
Koulikoro	253,104	151,323	101,781	335,045	191,982	143,063	32	27	41
Ségou	191,076	112,625	78,451	283,911	159,924	123,987	49	42	58
Sikasso	243,374	143,178	100,196	358,447	202,346	156,101	47	41	56
National	1,294,672	742,087	552,585	1,834,037	1,005,673	817,364	42	36	48

Source: MoE

The increase in the number of classrooms constructed by MoE and donors (including Japan) has contributed to an increase in enrolment. Table 4 shows the greater increase in girls' enrolment, indicating that access to education has been broadening for all.

(2) Pupil to classroom ratio

The project was designed to improve the learning environments at the 91 project schools by reducing the number of pupils per classroom, from 110 per class in 2001 to 82 per class in 2005. The evaluation team found that this target had been met. Table 5 shows the decrease in the number of pupils per classroom at the 66 surveyed schools, about which the Ex-Post Evaluation team was able to obtain reliable data (see "2.3 Constraints during the Evaluation Study"). The average number of pupils per classrooms at the 66 surveyed schools decreased from 105 in 2000 to 78 in 2009[36], indicating that classroom congestion had been alleviated by the project.

Table 5 Number of Pupils per Classroom at the Project Schools (66 schools)

District / Regions	2000	2009	No. Schools Assessed
Bamako	105	78	22
Koulikoro	104	59	7
Ségou	105	73	23
Sikasso	107	97	14
Average	105	78	-

Source: Ex-Post Evaluation team

(3) Number of schools where double shift and multiple classes systems were conducted

At the time of the Basic Design Study (2000), out of the 91 project schools, 67 (74%) were using the double shift class system and 4 (4%) were using the multiple class system. The Ex-Post Evaluation found that among the project schools the double shift class system was in operation at 18 schools (27%) and no school was operating the multiple class system. Very few

[36] The reduction in the number of pupils was smaller in Sikasso, compared to other district and regions. This is because 11 out of 15 project schools are located in Koutiala (Sikasso) where increases in enrolment were much higher. In Koutiala the total number of pupils enrolling in primary education doubled from 4,885 in 2002/2003 to 9,631 in 2008/2009 (according to the MoE statistics).

double shift classes were still being conducted in the first and sixth grade classes, and the number of double shift classes has also been greatly reduced in the other grades. Some of the project schools conducted double shift classes, not because there were too many pupils to be accommodated in one classroom, but because they had adopted a new curriculum which divided classes for pupils who were taught in two languages (both a local language and French) and for pupils who were taught only in French.

By resolving the double shift and the multiple class systems, pupils have longer hours to study in the classroom[37]. Under the double shift system, the first class usually begins at 8:30 and ends at 12:30, and the second class begins at 13:30 and ends at 17:30. Under the normal system, classes begins at 8:30, enters into lunch time at 12:00, resumes at 15: 00, and ends at 17:00. Longer study hours have enabled pupils to improve their understanding of the materials they are learning.

(4) Pupil to teacher ratio[38]

In the 66 surveyed schools, the total number of teachers had increased from 510 in 2000 to 756 in 2009 in proportion to the increase in the number of classrooms (from 418 in 2000 to 639 in 2009). As a result the pupil to teacher ratio across these schools was reduced from 86:1 to 66:1 during the same period (see Table 6).

Table 6 Number of Pupils per Teacher at the Project Schools (66 surveyed schools)

District/Region	2000	2009	No. Schools Assessed
Bamako	85	67	22
Koulikoro	82	41	7
Ségou	91	64	23
Sikasso	83	86	14
Average	86	66	-

Source: Ex-Post Evaluation team

3.3.2 Qualitative Effects

The interviews with principals and teachers at the project schools also confirmed that the project increased pupils' concentration in their studies by lowering the number of classmates in one class and providing sufficient numbers of chairs and tables. According to the reports from the community meetings conducted during the Basic Design Study, schools in the urban areas had waiting lists and pupils could not attend a school of their choice because the capacity limit of the school had been reached or they could not afford the entrance fee (although the payment was

[37] The Basic Design Study did not foresee the positive resulting outcome of resolving the double shift and the multiple class systems, which has enabled pupils to have longer hours to study in the classroom and lead to an improvement of their understanding of the materials they learn. This outcome was confirmed by the Ex-Post-Evaluation.

[38] The decrease in "pupil to teacher ratio" was not foreseen by the Basic Design Study either, but was also confirmed by the Ex-Post Evaluation.

not necessarily obligatory). In contrast, the interviews with principals, CGS members and teachers of the project schools conducted during the Ex-Post Evaluation revealed that the project: increased the capacity of the schools to enroll students, eliminating entrance refusal; decreased the number of pupils being taught at one time, which allowed a teacher's message to reach pupils with greater ease and clarity than before; and had created more space in a classroom solving a situation where pupils had to sit on the ground or be cramped up on a crowded bench, leading to an increase in their concentration in their classes.

In addition to improving access to primary education and the learning environments by constructing classrooms, the Basic Design Study listed the following direct project effects.

(1) The construction of principal's offices to ensure one principal's office per school would facilitate efficient school operation and management.

(2) The construction of a sufficient number of latrine buildings would create a hygienic and sanitary environment for pupils to study.

(3) The establishment of school sanitation clubs (in the soft component) would create an operational structure, through which school facilities would be properly maintained and effectively used.

Photo 4 Latrine Buildings

Photo 5
Hand Washing Basins

Photo 6 Pupils sweeping

Twenty seven principal's offices with storage were constructed to improve school management. According to school principals, the construction of their office improved the efficiency and effectiveness of their work. They are now able to keep textbooks and other teaching/learning materials within close range[39] and conduct their other administrative tasks such as writing reports and meeting guests without being disturbed. Improvements in principals' work environments have given them more sense of control over their work.

The hygiene and sanitation conditions have improved with the construction of pit latrines. However pit latrines were in serious shortage at the schools where a secondary school or other primary schools were located adjacent to or in the same complex as a project school. This was

[39] The principal of Kobalacoura commented that he had to keep textbooks and other materials at his home because it was the only safe place he could think of.

because latrines built by this project were used both by the students from a project school and the other schools.

Below are main activities that have been conducted under the soft component.

- Established a Soft Component Committee comprised of the representatives from MoE, the Ministry of Health, UNICEF, CAP and World Education[40].
- Produced a School Health Manual (textbooks for awareness raising, guideline for setting up a School Health Club and guidelines for maintenance) and posters for raising awareness.
- Conducted training for teachers on school health.
- Conducted seminars on cleaning and maintenance of school premises.
- Set up school sanitation clubs, monitored their activities and provided constructive advice.
- Conduced school health festivals [41].

According to the project completion reports, the above mentioned activities were implemented and followed up at 30 schools[42] as opposed to at 26 schools as originally planned in the Basic Design Study[43].

At the time of the Ex-Post Evaluation, principals, teachers, and CGS members at only a few of the schools could remember that these activities had been carried out. It can be deduced from the circumstances and interviews that sanitation clubs had effectively functioned for a few years, with their roles afterwards being taken over by the "Governments of Children" promoted by UNICEF (see "3.5.4 Current Status of Operation and Maintenance"). Those school principals and/or teachers who remembered how "seminars on cleaning and maintenance of school premises" had been carried out stated that the soft component helped increase teachers' and pupils' awareness about health and sanitation, complementing a regular health education program at schools.

This project has largely achieved its objectives; therefore its effectiveness is fair.

[40] World Education (NGO) implemented the soft component.
[41] According to a project completion report by the Japanese contractor for the project, the number of participants at the School Health Festivals were about 7,610 (400 participants for the festivals jointly conducted for Stages 1 and 2 and 7,210 participants for Stage 3). The impact of the festivals could not be ascertained as there was no record on the festivals kept at the schools and the CAPs and the memories of the event evaded over time.
[42] World Education an NGO was entrusted to implement the most of the activities.
[43] In the Basic Design Study, the soft component was planned be implemented at two schools from each CAP, a total of 26 schools from the 91 project schools. Six schools would be selected from Stage I, 12 from Stage II, 8 from Stage III. Where multiple project schools were located in the same complex, the soft component was applied to all the project schools in the complex, which increased the number of the schools that soft component was applied from that planned in the Basic Design Study.

3.4 Impact

3.4.1 Intended Effects

One of the indirect effects projected in the Basic Design Study was that the implementation of the soft component would facilitate a change in people's awareness about school facility maintenance, which would lead to an improvement in managerial skills and promotion of similar activities in other schools through the Regional Education Centers (Académie d'Enseignement: AE) and CAP. While the Ex-Post Evaluation collected information to verify this indirect effect, quantitative data to establish if this had been achieved could not be obtained.

The activities by sanitation clubs (soft component) have been taken over by the Government of Children, introduced with the support of UNICEF (see "3.3.2 Qualitative Effects"). As of 2007, a total of 2,860 Governments of Children had been set up at schools in seven out of nine regions[44]. Teachers of project schools reported that many of the children continue the same hygiene practices, such as washing their hands, in their own homes, leading to an improvement in the health of a pupil's family members as seemingly (such as the reduced frequency in diarrhea) their attitudes toward sanitation had been positively influenced. It is fair to hypothesize that the soft component, which initiated hygiene practices among children, contributed to an effective implementation of UNICEF's activities.

It is also expected that in general the progression rate to secondary schools from the project schools would increase as an indirect effect of the educational environments improved by the project[45]. Although the data to support this hypothesis was not available, the enrolment rate in secondary education as shown in the table below had increased from 2002/03 to 2007/08 at the target district and regions due to efforts by MoE and donors including Japan.

Table 7 Increase in Gross Enrolment Rate in Secondary Education at the Target District and Regions (%, 2002/03-2007/08)

District/Region	2002/03			2007/08		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
Bamako	74.6	64.1	69.4	81.7	76.5	79.1
Koulikoro	52.2	24.7	38.3	64.1	37.1	50.4
Ségou	31.6	17.8	24.6	51.1	31.1	40.9
Sikasso	38.2	19.3	28.6	44.9	27.6	36.1

Source: MoE

3.4.2 Other Impacts

Neither relocation of residents nor land acquisition was needed for this project and there was no perceivable environmental impact caused by the construction of the schools.

[44] United Nations Economic and Social Council, UNICEF, Draft Country Programme Document: Mali, 9 April 2007
[45] This effect was not foreseen by the Basic Evaluation Study. It was newly identified and verified during the Ex-Post Evaluation.

Through implementation of the project, the projected indirect effect has to some degree occurred and has brought about positive impacts for beneficiaries other than pupils attending the project schools.

3.5 Sustainability (Rating: b)

3.5.1 Structural Aspects of Operation and Maintenance

In Mali where decentralization of the education sector has been implemented, CGSs comprised of parents, community, and school representatives are responsible for daily maintenance of school facilities. The Basic Design Study listed the following as their main roles:

- To raise awareness among community members about the importance of being involved in school maintenance.
- To construct school facilities and maintain school equipment
- To facilitate enrolment
- To participate in employing teachers
- To participate in forming the school's curriculum

It was observed in the Ex-Post Evaluation that most of CGSs meet once or twice a month, with their involvement in school management and school facility maintenance varying widely among individual schools. While some CGSs have only done minor repairs of school equipment, such as tables and chairs, some CGSs have completed more major initiatives, even constructing a principal's office or night watchman's house. The difference in the scope of CGSs' activities depends on: the level of commitment of the parents; cooperation of the community; and management skills of the principal. This was rightly pointed out in the Basic Design Study and the same conditions still determine the scope of CGSs' activities.

3.5.2 Technical Aspects of Operation and Maintenance

The facilities constructed by the project were built under the deign policy that they would be within the community members' ability to financially and technically maintain; therefore, no specific technical skill beyond teachers' or CGSs' capabilities are required to fulfill these.

3.5.3 Financial Aspects of Operation and Maintenance

The most critical issue in the maintenance of schools is how to gather financial resources to maintain school facilities and equipment in their original state. While the facilities built by the project do not require a large scale renovation for a long time, minor repairs needed to be done

annually to tables, chairs, doors, and blackboards; in addition, pit latrines need to be pumped out periodically which requires preparation by saving large amounts of fund[46].

Under Mali's decentralization policy, responsibility of school maintenance has been transferred from the State to CGSs and the fees collected from parents are managed jointly by CGS and the principals. The Basic Design Study projected that the entrance, semester and annual student fees as well as other parent's contributions to school expenses would be sufficient to cover the maintenance cost of the facilities built by the project[47].

The Ex-Post Evaluation found, however, that at the majority of the project schools the fees collected from the parents were insufficient to cover the maintenance costs. The fees rates differ widely across the schools; at 50% of the project schools almost all parents (except for those who are exempt due to their low income) pay entrance fees but only half of them pay semester fees and/or annual pupil fees. Out of the limited amount of the fees collected all CGSs appeared to pay at least the minimum level of expenses required for school management, such as for the repair of tables and chairs, and for consumable school supplies and cleaning equipment, but there was no CGS that had already painted classroom walls or had been reserving funds for necessary future expenses, such as pumping out pit latrines and painting walls.

Since a majority of the CGSs do not receive any financial support from local administrations ("communes"), their financial source for school management and maintenance depends solely on the financial contributions from parents. There are some exceptions to this, such as schools that have received temporary financial assistance through the Direct Support to Improve School Performance (Appui Direct á l'Amélioration des Rendements Scolaires: ADARS) [48] and schools whose local administration pays their water bills.

3.5.4 Current Status of Operation and Maintenance

The principals of the interviewed schools uniformly claimed that all rooms were cleaned by pupils at least once a day and the latrines at least once a week. Most of the schools in the target areas have in cooperation with UNICEF introduced the Government of Children, under which

[46] The cost of pumping out excreta is between 25,000 CFA (approx. USD 50) and 35,000 CFA (approx. USD70) per pit latrine. The frequency to pump out excreta is between 0.2 times and 3 times, depending on the number of users. Among the project schools visited by the Ex-Post Evaluation team, six schools had pit latrines, which were already filled up and no longer could be used until excreta were pumped out, and several schools would face the same problem in the near future.

[47] The amount of parent's contribution varies between schools (enrolment fee: 500 CFA – 7,500 CFA, and annual student fee: 225CFA-2,000CFA). The most typical case observed in the Ex-Post Evaluation was 5,000CFA for the enrolment fee and 1,000CFA for the annual student fee.

[48] The first financial disbursement from ADARS (World Bank financed) benefited 2,855 schools in 2007 (the World Bank, Implementation Completion and Results Report, June 28, 2008 Report No. ICR0000422). The objective of the ADARS system was to reduce school fees, which represent one of the most important barriers to school attendance among the poor. (Mailan Chiche, "Country Desk Study. Mali, Mid-Term Evaluation of the EFA Fast Track Initiative," June 2009)

the children elected a "Minister of Health" and "Minister for the Environment" responsible for promoting sanitary practices among pupils and the cleaning of school premises. This system seems generally effective in keeping classrooms clean and raising their awareness about sanitation.

(1) Classroom buildings

All the interviewed schools check and record an inventory of all the furniture and equipment at the end of the school year (and also at the beginning in many schools) and report it to back to the Ministry in accordance with the Government's regulations.

No major breakage in classrooms or loss of equipment was reported at the schools interviewed. The Ex-Post Evaluation team observed that at some schools the surface of many desks was peeling off and once cracks develop in the surface, pupils had started to peel it off. This was only the case with desks with a plywood surfaces, commonly observed at the project schools in Bamako District and Ségou; the surface of the other type of desks which are made from solid planks have not been damaged. Another problem that was commonly found at many schools was that the surfaces of blackboards were beginning to come off. Cleaning blackboards with a wet cloth (commonly practiced in Mali) causes the blackboard paint to be worn off overtime. Breakages of door knobs and locks on pit latrines were commonly found at the majority of project schools, which may be attributable to the use of cheap materials.

Photo 7 Tables with Damages Surface

Photo 8 Blackboard with Damage Surface

Photo 9 Filthy Latrine Building

(2) Latrine buildings

The maintenance/condition of the latrines in half of the urban area schools and of some of the rural area schools was in a dreadful state, while those of the other schools had been kept clean. Two major factors, both of which are beyond the Government of Children's capacity, were observed to be the cause of the filthy condition of the latrines: (a) the incapability of the CGS to raise funds (details are described below) for the pumping out of excreta; and (b) the lack of determination by the school principals to exercise strong discipline to their pupils about sanitation.

The principals of some schools claimed that they were no longer capable of maintaining clean latrines because too many pupils were overburdening the number of pit latrines (see "3.3.2 Qualitative Effects"). However, the fact that there were some schools with a similar pupil to latrine ratio that were managing to maintain their latrines in good condition indicates that the condition of the latrines was mostly dependent on an individual school's discipline and attention.

As there are some areas of improvement that could be made in the organizational, financial, and technical aspects of sustainability in this project, the sustainability of the project was consequently evaluated as fair.

(3) Distribution of textbooks

At the time of the Basic Design Study, it was projected that the delivery and quality of textbooks would improve as publishing of textbooks were to be entrusted to private companies. Several project schools reported that, as a result of the entrustment, the delivery had improved but the binding of textbook had deteriorated and most textbooks could not be reused after being used for a year. The low quality of textbooks coupled with the MoET's insufficient budget had created the situation where the majority of project schools did not have one textbook per student. At the most project schools one textbook was shared by two and four pupils at the time of the Ex-Post Evaluation.

(4) Handing-over of manuals

Certain technical rules must be followed in order to maintain the facilities and equipment in good condition over a long period. These rules were compiled by the Japanese consultants in a technical manual and were distributed to all schools where the soft component was introduced. The Ex-Post Evaluation team found that none of the school principals at the surveyed schools who had assumed office after the construction of the classrooms knew of the existence of the technical manual. Since the handover of responsibilities from old to new school principals is neither systematic nor comprehensive, this type of important information is often permanently lost. The MoE regulations require only CGS representatives to witness a transfer, which is by no means sufficient to guarantee a transfer's thoroughness. Likewise, all manuals or brochures that were distributed through the soft component, or school cleaning campaigns supported by UNICEF, simply became personal property and thus they were never reused. Although the loss of manuals and brochures does not necessarily lead to degradation of facilities because of resulting poor maintenance due to this loss, the handing-over of these materials is indispensable in raising awareness among new principals and teachers about the necessity of maintenance activities.

Some problems have been observed in terms of the structural and financial aspects of sustainability in this project; therefore the sustainability of the project is fair.

4 Conclusion, Recommendations and Lessons Learned

4.1 Conclusion

The relevance of the project has been evaluated as high because it is in line with the Mali Government's development policies and Japanese Government's aid policies, while meeting the needs of local population. The efficiency of the project has been evaluated as fair, since the actual construction period exceeded the planned period although the construction cost was within the proposed amount and the buildings constructed by the project were highly praised by all levels of beneficiaries for their high quality and minimum needs for repair. The effectiveness of the project has been evaluated as high, as it has contributed to an increase in enrolment in the target district/regions, significantly decreased the double shift classes and eliminated multiple classes. Also the pupil to teacher and the pupil to classroom ratios decreased at the project schools (compared to the ratios before the project), which indicates improvement in the learning environments. While it was not possible to measure the effects that the soft component has had on pupils' awareness about hygiene and sanitation, the general hygiene levels at the project schools had improved with the addition of pit latrines. The sustainability of the project has been evaluated as fair, since CGSs which are responsible for school facility maintenance lack the managerial and financial skills to collect sufficient financial contributions from the community and appropriately use the funds.

In light of the above, this project is evaluated to be (B) satisfactory.

4.2 Recommendations

4.2.1 Recommendations to the Executing Agency

Since a number of CGSs lack leadership, and the financial and operational capacity, it is recommended that MoE in collaboration with donor agencies (including JICA) compile information on examples of good CGS management and use this to formulate and implement programs for CGS capacity development. In order for CGSs to become able to exercise leadership, members need to primarily understand their roles and responsibilities in the school management system. CGS members should be trained so that they become able to keep records at meetings, establish action plans and prepare financial reports. Once a CGS (a schools governance mechanism) properly functions school principals' commitment will increase under its pressure, which will lead to an improvement in schools' daily operation and maintenance activities, including cleaning of toilets.

Since at the majority of the project schools the fees collected from the parents were insufficient to cover the maintenance costs (see"3.5.3 Financial Aspects of Operation and Maintenance"), CGSs should be encouraged to raise funds in some way or another when they cannot collect a sufficient amount of money from parents, such as by renting out classrooms to private companies and NGOs at night or during weekends for training courses and other practical uses. At some project schools, pit latrines had already filled up without any near future plan to pump out excreta and it was most likely that the number of project schools in the same situation would increase. In order to avoid the occurrence of such an unhygienic condition, it is crucial for CGSs to reserve funds aside for pumping out excreta. In May 2009, JICA launched a three year project to strengthen the CGSs by providing technical assistance, targeting 109 schools in Koulikoro Region. Once an effective support mechanism for CGSs has been developed through this technical assistance project, operational CGS models should be disseminated nationwide.

The Japanese consultancy firm responsible for the soft component prepared and distributed a technical guidance manual on maintenance and cleaning of classrooms/equipment to all schools (principals) targeted for the soft component, though none of the principals who had assumed office after the construction of the classrooms knew about the existence of this technical manual (see "3.5.2 Technical Aspects of Operation and Maintenance"). MoE's regulations require only CGS representatives to witness a transfer of services between principals, which is by no means sufficient to guarantee a transfer's thoroughness. The handover of tasks done by school principals is currently conducted in an ad hoc manner, which can lead to a loss of important information. MoE should prepare guidelines for the handover of duties, including a standard filing procedure, and the handover should be conducted in the presence of CAP representatives in order to make sure that all important information is properly handed over.

4.2.2 Recommendations to JICA

Since the physical problems with educational facilities discussed in "3.2.1 Project Outputs" came about after the warranty period had expired, the attribution of these problems is not clear. If the repair of facilities is judged to be done in a cost-efficient manner, it is recommended that JICA takes remedial measures while investigating the cause of the problems.

The JICA's CGS Support Project (technical assistance) that began in May 2008 and were planned to be implemented for the period of three years targets 109 primary schools in Koulikoro Region. Since a CGS's performance is the key to the successful operation and maintenance of school buildings, it is recommendable to extend CGS capacity building support to other regions so that effective usage of the facilities constructed by Japan would be ensured.

4.3 Lessons Learned

None of the principals who had assumed office after the construction of the classrooms knew about the existence of the technical manual (see "3.5.1 Structural Aspects of Operation and Maintenance"). Most of the manuals and brochures prepared thorough soft component simply became personal property of the teachers. When JICA provides instructions that are to be read and followed repeatedly, at least one copy should be reserved as the school's property and should be indicated as such.

There is some room for improvement in the selection of materials (see "3.5.4 Current Status of Operation and Maintenance"). Since using a wet cloth to clean the surface of blackboards is a common practice in Mali, materials that have good water resistance should be used for blackboards. As the two types of desks were supplied with different surfaces - plywood and plank, and as the desks with plywood surface proved to be easily damaged, this material should be avoided in the future.

The Republic of Niger

Ex-Post Evaluation of Japanese Technical Cooperation Project

"Project on Support to the Improvement of School Management through Community Participation"

External Evaluators: Satoru TAKAHASHI, Shimako NARAHARA IMG Inc.

1 Overview of the Project

Project Location

Mouwadala I Primary School
(Tahoua Region)

1.1 Background

The Republic of Niger, one of the poorest countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, has suffered from poor standards of education with huge regional and gender disparities. To address this situation, the Government of Niger developed the Ten-Year Education Development Programme (Programme Décennal de Développement de l'Education: PDDE) 2002-2012, which aimed to enhance access, quality and the system of education. Above all the PDDE places great value on the decentralization of education through community participation and more specifically the Government encourages each primary school to set up a school management committee (comité de gestion de établissement scolaire: COGES), composed of six members: a principal, one teacher's representative, one mother's association representative, and three parent's association representatives. This COGES policy lets those stakeholders assume responsibility for making a school action plan and implementing activities, such as: maintenance of buildings, procurement of textbooks and materials, and administration of contract teachers, thereby improving school management and establishing superior quality of education. The Government also expects a

COGES will dispel community people's distrust in schools and shorten the psychological distance between a school and its community.

COGESs were organized on a pilot scheme basis in February 2002. It was then recognized at the COGES evaluation meeting in September 2003 that while some COGESs had produced positive achievements, others had not functioned. The attendants in the meeting therefore shared viewpoints that to make COGESs functional it was necessary to: provide training(s) for COGES members, involve more women, establish rules, and strengthen the regional education officers' support system.

Under such circumstances the Government of Niger officially requested the Government of Japan to implement a technical cooperation project designed to develop, through capacity building of central and local administrators, an effective COGES model.

1.2 Project Outline

Overall Goal	A model for School Based Management with community participation through COGES is expanded.
Project Purpose	A model for School Based Management with community participation through COGES is reinforced.
Output	1. Community participation in school management is enhanced.
	2. Capacity of COGES in the target schools is enhanced in Tahoua Region.
	3. Functional "COGES communes" (alliance of COGESs) are formed.
	4. Support system for COGES is consolidated.
	5. Replicability of COGES management model experimented in Tahoua Region increases.
Inputs	【Japanese side】 1. Dispatch of Experts (119.5M/M): 4 Long-term experts (104.4MM)／3 Short-term experts (15.1M/M) 2. Counterpart Training in Japan: 5 persons 3. Provision of Equipment: 30,336 thousand yen (until the time of terminal evaluation) 4. Operation Cost: 118,504 thousand yen (until the time of terminal evaluation) 【Nigerien side】 1. Assignment of Counterpart personnel: 23 persons 2. Office Space for Experts from Japan: 2 rooms 3. Operation Cost: None (No budget was allocated for the project operation)
Total Cost	365,019 thousand yen (until the time of terminal evaluation)
Period of Cooperation	1 January 2004 - 31 July 2007 (The project was first planned for three years [until 31 December 2006], but it was extended to 31 July 2007)
Executing Organization in Niger	Ministry of National Education
Supporting Organization in Japan	None
Related Projects	Project on Classroom Construction in the Departments of Dosso and Tahoua in the Republic of Niger (Grant Aid)

1.3 Summary of the Terminal Evaluation

(1) Achievement of the Overall Goal on Project Completion

The national policy paper stipulated that this project's COGES local model should be adopted as the national model, however the project model was not introduced in other regions. The terminal evaluation report stated that, with the continuous efforts of the Ministry of Basic Education and Literacy (Ministère de l'Education de Base 1 et Alphabetisation: MEB/A) – later renamed the Ministry of National Education (Ministère de l'Education Nationale: MEN) – the achievement of the overall goal is likely in the future.

(2) Achievement of the Project Purpose on Project Completion

The project purpose was mostly achieved, however, among the outputs modified and added by mid-term evaluation, the output of forming functional COGES communes – later renamed the communal federation of COGES (fédération communale des COGES: FCC) – was found to be too difficult to establish even after a seven month project extension; after which period it was taken over by the Phase 2 of the project, starting from August 2007.

(3) Recommendations by the Terminal Evaluation Team

In the short term, the following are recommended: 1) documentation of the COGES model, 2) standardization and clarification of FCC's role and function, 3) support to the COGES working group, 4) organization of stakeholder workshops at a national level, 5) external review of the COGES model, and 6) reinforcement of COGES policy. In the medium/long-term, the following are recommended: 1) strengthening of the Section of Promotion of COGES (Cellule de Promotion des COGES: C.P.COGES), 2) formulation of strategies at a national level, and 3) ensuring sustainability of the COGES model.

2 Outline of the Evaluation Study

2.1 External Evaluators

Satoru TAKAHASHI (IMG Inc.)

Shimako NARAHARA (IMG Inc.)

2.2 Duration of the Evaluation Study

Duration of the Study: October 2009 – September 2010

Duration of the Field Study: 13th March 2010 – 11th April 2010

2.3 Constraints during the Evaluation Study

The evaluation team planned to visit as many COGESs and FCCs as possible in the project sites of Tahoua and Zinder Regions. However, due to a coup staged in February 2010 and an increasing threat from Al-Qaeda, most parts of the regions became off-limits for civilian visitors and consequently the team was only allowed to visit one third of the whole targeted area. Under such conditions the team with a local assistant visited and interviewed stakeholders at 36 COGESs and 6 FCCs in Tahoua as well as 31 COGESs and 8 FCCs in Zinder.

The team found that documents and records were missing at schools because principals usually took them when they were transferred to another school, meaning that no school possessed quantitative data for the past few years. In lieu of this the team had to visit the Educational Inspector's Offices (Inspection de l'Enseignement de Base: IEB) to obtain records.

After the project was over on 31st July 2007, Phase 2 of the project targeting the whole country, including the said two regions, started on the following day with a three year total duration. As a result it was impossible to completely separate the influences caused by the subsequent project (which was still in operation at the time of this report).

3 Results of the Evaluation (Rating: B)

3.1 Relevance (Rating: a)

3.1.1 Relevance with the Nigerien Government Policies for Development

Niger's Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP), which is equivalent to Niger's development policy or strategy, marks out the education sector as an important area. The Basic Education Law (Loi sur l'Education de Base) promulgated in 1998 placed education at the top of the nation's list of priorities. The PDDE 2002-2012 aims, through sharing responsibility with communities, to attain sustainable development and it regards community participation as a key element in realizing this. The project also coincided with the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), one of whose goals is to achieve universal primary education.

3.1.2 Relevance with Development Needs

According to the Statistics of Basic Education (Statistiques de l'Education de Base) 2004–2005 the gross enrolment rate (GER) in primary education in Tahoua Region was 48%, with a female student GER of 33%. They came in fourth and eighth respectively out of the eight Niger regions. In Zinder Region GER was 41% (eighth place) and female GER was 35% (seventh place). Female student proportion out of all students was 34% in Tahoua (last place) and 42% in Zinder (fifth place). The completion rate of primary education in Tahoua was 28% (sixth place) with the female completion rate being 17% (last place), and in Zinder completion rate of

primary education was 24% (last place) with the female completion rate being 19% (seventh place).

Thus the two target regions had relatively lower educational indicators in Niger and were in greater need of educational development. The approach focusing on community participation was also appropriate to address the issues of access, quality and the system of education.

3.1.3 Relevance with the Japan's ODA Policy

In the third Tokyo International Conference on Africa Development (TICAD) held in 1993, the three pillars of Japan's basic policy for assistance to Africa were announced, namely: "human-centered development," "poverty reduction through economic development," and "consolidation of peace." In TICAD IV in 2008 Japan announced that it would double its assistance to Africa.

In 2002 Japan announced its "Basic Education for Growth Initiative" (BEGIN) to the international community at the Kananaskis (Canada) Summit, identifying its strategy to support basic education in developing countries. BEGIN sets out three priority areas: 1) assistance for ensuring access to education, 2) assistance for improving quality of education, and 3) improvement of management of education.

Thus the project is consistent with the Japanese Government's commitments in Africa and its aid policies for basic education.

This project has been highly relevant with: the Nigerien development plan, development needs in Niger, as well as the Japan's ODA policy; therefore its relevance is high.

3.2 Effectiveness (Rating: a)

3.2.1 Achievement of the Project (Outputs)

3.2.1.1 Output 1

Output 1 is "Community participation in school management is enhanced." Two indicators were set for this output.

Table 1 Achievements of Output 1

Indicators	Targets	Achievements
1. Percentage of schools that set up a COGES by democratic election in Tahoua Region	80% of schools	98% of schools
2. Average number of activities implemented by a COGES	One or more activities implemented by 80% of COGESs	Over 5 activities implemented by 98% of COGESs

Source: Terminal evaluation Mission Report (2007)

The first indicator target of 80% (of schools that set up a COGES) was met and passed: 1,205 schools representing 98% out of a total number of 1,229 schools in Tahoua Region (except in areas where other donors have interventions in operation) set up COGESs. A COGES consists of six members; a principal, one teacher's representative, one mother's association representative, and three parent's association representatives. Except a principal and a teacher, COGES members are democratically elected. The second indicator target of 80% (of activities implemented by a COGES) was also met and passed: on average more than five activities were implemented. Thus both targets were met and Output 1 was achieved.

3.2.1.2 Output 2

Output 2 is "Capacity of COGES in the target schools is enhanced in Tahoua Region." Four indicators were set for this output.

Table 2 Achievements of Output 2

Indicators	Targets	Achievements
1. Percentage of newly targeted schools whose COGES members received training on school activity planning	90% of schools	94% of schools
2. Percentage of early-established COGESs whose members attended a seminar for improving the relationship between teachers and community	90% of COGESs	100 % of COGESs
3. Number of COGESs in Bouza and Konni Districts whose members received APP training	65 COGESs	64 COGESs
4. A report summarizing the activities and lessons learned of the "School project"	A report was written.	A report was written.

Source: Terminal evaluation Mission Report (2007)

The first indicator target of 90% (COGES members received training) was met and passed: 962 schools – representing 94% – of a total of 1,017 newly targeted schools received training on school activity planning. The second indicator target of 90% (early-established COGESs members who attended seminars) was also met and passed: all of the 151 schools (100%) attended a seminar for improving the relationship between teachers and community. The third indicator target of 65 COGESs (members receiving APP training) was very nearly met: 64 COGESs members from schools in Bouza and Konni Districts received training on the practical and productive activities (activités pratiques productives: APP). The fourth indicator target of report writing was completed in eight pilot schools by summarizing activities and lessons learned through the "school project"[49]; however, COGES members had difficulty in distinguishing between the implementation of a "school project" and the development of a

[49] The "school project" is a sub-project or pilot activity under the main project. It is not a singular activity, but a steady effort to solve fundamental and time-consuming problems in schools. With seed money funded by the main project, income generation activities were conducted to earn financial resources.

school activity plan, and they found it difficult to implement and manage income generation activities, so the "school project" was terminated without expansion to other schools.

Other than those above, there were three COGESs that founded community kindergartens in their schools and two COGESs opened a second chance class intended for children coming in over the normal school attendance/entry age.

Regarding the targets and achievements above Output 2 was by and large achieved. However, most of the indicators were related to training received so they are not sufficient to measure the extent that the COGESs capacity was enhanced. It is thought it should be in the COGES's capacity to cover: organizational strength, decision-making and implementing and financial capacity, and due to these various roles it was difficult to evaluate COGESs with limited description in the terminal evaluation report, so this issue will be covered later in "3.5 Sustainability" where firsthand information was presented at the time of the Ex-Post Evaluation.

3.2.1.3 Output 3

Output 3 is "Functional "COGES communes" (alliance of COGESs) are formed." Two indicators were set for this output.

Table 3 Achievements of Output 3

Indicators	Targets	Achievements
1. Percentage of communes that set up a FCC by democratic election	70% of communes	100% of communes
2. Average number of activities implemented by a FCC	One or more activities implemented by 80% of FCCs	One or more activities implemented by 100% of FCCs

Source: Terminal evaluation Mission Report (2007)

The first indicator target of 70% (communes that set up a FCC) was met and passed: 39 communes were set up – representing 100% – with 12 people selected from the COGES membership by democratic election ("COGES communes" was later renamed "communal federation of COGES" [FCC]). The second indicator target of 80% (one or more activities implemented by a FCC) was also met and passed: one campaign promoting school enrolment was conducted by the seven early-established COGESs in 2005 and another campaign for "improving quality of education" was conducted by 39 – representing 100% of the target communes – FCCs in 2006.

As described above FCCs were formed but these indicators alone cannot corroborate whether FCCs are functional or not, although in regards to this the terminal evaluation report states that: the formation of functional FCCs has not been achieved and this remains a challenge ahead, adding that the strengthening of FCC's monitoring capacity and establishing of efficient monitoring methods are necessary. The report also judged that in Phase 2 of the project, which

started without interruption and was initiated to tackle these challenges, Output 3 was not achieved even after the period of cooperation was extended for seven months.

3.2.1.4 Output 4

Output 4 is "Support system for COGES is consolidated." Three indicators were set for this output.

Table 4 Achievements of Output 4

Indicators	Targets	Achievements
1. Holding a FCC meeting in Tahoua Region	Holding a FCC meeting at least once in all 39 communes	Held a FCC meeting four times in all 39 communes
2. Holding a COGES officer meeting	Holding a regular meeting	Held a monthly meeting
3. Clarifying and stipulating the role and relationships of/among various COGES-supporting institutions	Clarification and stipulation	Completion of a guideline

Source: Terminal evaluation Mission Report (2007)

The first indicator target of all 39 communes in Tahoua Region holding a FCC meeting at least once was achieved: meetings were held four times by every commune. The second indicator target of holding regular COGES officer meetings was also achieved: they were held on a monthly basis from January 2004. The third indicator of clarifying and stipulating the role and relation of/among various COGES-supporting institutions and organizations was achieved by completing a guideline.

As stated above, the foundation of the support system for COGES was strengthened, but the support system itself had yet to be consolidated; the terminal evaluation report points out in regards to this that the COGES-supporting system had nearly been established, but documentation of the FCCs' role was inadequate.

3.2.1.5 Output 5

Output 5 is "Replicability of COGES management model experimented in Tahoua Region increases." Two indicators were set for this output.

Table 5 Achievements of Output 5

Indicators	Targets	Achievements
1. Percentage of schools that set up a COGES in pilot schools in Zinder Region	80% of schools	100% of schools
2. Average number of activities implemented by a COGES	One or more activities implemented by 80% of COGESs	Over 4 activities implemented by 98% of COGESs

Source: Terminal evaluation Mission Report (2007)

The first indicator target of 80% (schools that set up a COGES in pilot schools) was surpassed: 60 schools – representing 100% – out of all the pilot schools in Zinder Region that set up a COGES. The second indicator target of 80% of COGES implementing one or more activities was also surpassed: more than four activities on average were implemented. The school activity fund collected from parents and villagers were on average 210,000 FCFA.

Thus both targets were met and Output 5 was achieved, in addition COGESs were established not only in the 60 pilot schools but also in all the 1,544 schools in Zinder Region as the project, by following the recommendation made by the terminal evaluation team, pressed ahead with a full application of itself.

The Nigerien Government used to have a policy of gradually increasing the COGESs by one thousand every year, but it suddenly changed its policy in April 2005 and made the establishing of a COGES compulsory in all schools across the whole country. In response to this, it was agreed at the time of the mid-term review, to include Zinder Region as an additional project site with the 60 pilot schools being inside this region.

Photo 1 A fence constructed based on a school activity plan in Takeita Centre Primary School in Zinder Region

Photo 2 A thatched classroom constructed based on a school activity plan in Biliangue Primary School in Tahoua Region

3.2.2 Achievements of the Project Purpose

The project purpose is "A model for School Based Management with community participation through CIGES is reinforced." The three following indicators were set for the project purpose.

In 80% of primary schools in Tahoua Region, except areas experiencing interventions by other donors;

1) COGES members are elected by democratic election.
2) School activity plans approved at community meetings are implemented.
3) Monitoring is conducted by FCCs or COGES officers.

As stated in "3.2.1 Achievements of the Project Outputs" COGESs were set up by democratic election in 1,205 schools – representing 98% – out of a total of 1,229 schools in Tahoua Region.

Then based on a school activity plan, an average number of 5.16 activities were implemented by COGESs, however, COGES officers were unable to conduct monitoring; this was because COGES officers (and even at the time of this report) were not assigned at the commune level, but at the district level. The area of a district is too vast for only one COGES officer to monitor all the schools in his/her district, conversely FCCs had meetings four times a year and yet they were still inexperienced with little proficiency for monitoring COGESs.

Thus, reinforcement of the School Based Management model with community participation through COGES was achieved, as was the project purpose in general. However, it was judged at the time of terminal evaluation that the strengthening of FCCs' monitoring capacity and system was necessary. The report also remarked that the project would need more time for modeling a FCC, and in response to this, the project was extended for seven months until the end of July 2007. Even with this extension the COGES monitoring system fell short of being modeled. Phase 2 of the project was initiated in August 2007, with a three year duration, to continue to tackle this challenge.

In light of these, this project has largely achieved its objectives; therefore its effectiveness is high.

3.3 Efficiency (Rating: b)

3.3.1 Inputs

Components of Inputs	Plan (at the time of the preparatory study)	Results (at the time of the terminal evaluation)
Dispatch of Experts	- Long-term experts: 2 (72M/M) - Short-term experts: 2 per year (upon necessity)	- Long-term experts: 4 (104.4M/M) - Short-term experts: 3 (15.1M/M)
Training in Japan	A few per year	5 persons (mainly in educational administration)
Training in a Third Country (Burkina Faso)	n/a	13 persons (in school based management with community participation)
Provision of Equipment	Vehicle: motorbike	Vehicle: motorbike
Operational Cost	n/a	118,504 thousand yen
Total Cost of Cooperation	Nearly 250,000 thousand yen	365,019 thousand yen
Inputs from the Nigerien Government	n/a	None

3.3.1.1 Input Components

(1) Background

When the Record of Discussion (R/D) was signed in December 2003 the project purpose was to strengthen community participation in school management at 171 COGES experimental schools in the Tahoua Region. However, after the Nigerien Government's policy change (making COGES compulsory in all schools nationwide in April 2005) the mid-term review mission

concluded that the original project purpose had already been achieved and set out a new project purpose: "A model for School Based Management with community participation is reinforced." In order to verify the replicability of the model, 60 schools were newly selected in Zinder Region where it was applied and tested. After that and in response to the recommendations made by the terminal evaluation team the model should be disseminated throughout Zinder Region, a total of about 2,800 schools (1,300 in Tahoua, 1,500 in Zinder) became targets of the project.

(2) Results of analysis

Firstly, a slight adjustment was made with training abroad, as training in a "third country" was not originally planned but was implemented in Burkina Faso as well as in Japan. Given the nature of a COGES policy and the progression of decentralization in the education sector, it became obvious that Niger differed from Japan. So with all the factors taken into consideration, including cost-effectiveness, the number of participants to be trained in Japan was reduced and the number of participants to be trained in Burkina Faso was increased.

Secondly, the aforementioned early achievement of the project purpose is proof that the quality, quantity and timing of each input component were appropriate. Other contributing factors were the complete use of experience gained through the soft component – which was aimed at the improvement of school management (Composant soft visant à l'amélioration de la gestion des écoles: COSAGE) under a grant aid project for Classroom Construction in Tahoua Region – and the collaboration with a local non-governmental organization (NGO) which was familiar with the geography and indigenous languages.

In the mid-term review, some modifications were made in the project design matrix (PDM) where a new output of forming functional FCCs was added. The project conducted activities to produce this output: extending the period of cooperation for seven months and providing additional input components. As a result it was observed that the FCCs had been somehow monitoring the COGESs, thereby achieving their minimum role. Yet, it also became clear that only a small number of FCCs had been able to collect contributions from COGESs, which was needed in order for an FCC to be deemed functional as written in the Phase 2 report issued in July 2007.

As stated above, a series of input components were duly created but they did not produce all the expected and desired outputs. Rather than attributing this to the inadequacy and irrelevance of the input components, one interpretation could be that the new output (the formation of functional FCCs) added in the PDM at the time of the mid-term review turned out to be more demanding than expected. Still, it is a fact that the project could not achieve the formation of functional FCCs, even with the cooperation period being extended. What is discussed here is the

quality or degree of difficulty (challenge level) of the output, and not the actual quantity of the output, so if appropriate but less difficult outputs were stipulated in the PDM they would have been produced within the period regardless of the quantity of them.

3.3.1.2 Project cost

Chapter 3 of the preliminary study report issued in January 2004 stated that the total cost of the project should be around 250 million yen; with the actual cost being over 365 million yen as a result of the extension of the cooperation period. For this extension, a new R/D and PDM (attached to the Minutes of Meeting) were signed again, and additional activities with extra inputs were implemented. Still, the output of forming functional FCCs was not fully achieved, but from some points of view such extra inputs would always be unavailing if they are considered from a position of entering the project in Phase 2.

3.3.1.3 Period of cooperation

This project was extended by seven months, and at last count the period of cooperation was three years and seven months. As mentioned earlier this extension was primarily attributable to the addition of a demanding output, specifically the formation of functional FCCs which evidently proved too difficult to accomplish (even after 7,500 stakeholders received training in the two regions). Considering that Phase 2 of the project of which the duration is three years had taken over this challenging task, the seven month extension alone was not long enough to produce this output.

In light of these, the total period of cooperation was insufficient to attain the outputs (and the project purpose) that were modified at the time of the mid-term review; therefore efficiency of the project is fair.

3.4 Impact

3.4.1 Achievement of the Overall Goal

(1) Background

According to the terminal evaluation report this project started as a pilot project aimed at creating a replicable model for school-based management, with lessons learned through trials in about 20 schools in Tahoua Region. However, in April 2005 the Nigerien Government changed its COGES policy, making it compulsory to establish COGES in every school throughout the country and as a result the government requested JICA to expand its target areas. To accommodate the PDM was modified at the mid-term review in July 2005, and the overall goal was changed from “Children’s learning environment is improved in the project site through community participation in school management” to “A model for School Based Management

with community participation through COGES is expanded." As a consequence, the project "was transformed into one that focused on broad-based dissemination throughout the two regions", as described in terminal evaluation report. The project, through following the recommendation made by the terminal evaluation team, increased the number of target schools from 60 to all the schools in Zinder Region and eventually the number of target schools increased up to nearly 2,800 schools (1,300 schools in Tahoua Region and 1,500 schools in Zinder Region).

(2) Results of analysis

A model of COGESs that could be disseminated was developed and applied in the two regions where the project activities were conducted, and in this sense the overall goal was achieved. This model was adopted into the COGES policy and became widespread throughout the nation. It was ascertained in January 2010 by the terminal evaluation team for Phase 2 of the project that at least five regions (Tahoua, Zinder, Maradi, Tillaberi and Dosso) had had a meeting (forum) at least once for all COGESs and education officers to attend.

The Ex-Post Evaluation team visited 67 schools (36 schools in Tahoua Region and 31 schools in Zinder Region) and met with COGES members such as principals, teachers, parents and villagers. All 67 schools (100%) selected COGES members by democratic election and it was also found that female members were selected not only from a mother's association but also from a parent's association and from teachers. But despite the regulations set by the ministerial decree, less than 40% of the schools had conducted a COGES election every year, meaning that the rest of the schools (60%) decided to have the same COGES members through just dialogue and not through an election (see "3.5 Sustainability").

3.4.2 Other Impacts

This clause refers to the educational indicators in quantitative terms although they were not stipulated in the PDM. There was a positive tendency observed in the indicators at the schools which the Ex-Post Evaluation team visited and obtained reliable data from, this was also confirmed by the official statistics. These statistics showed that the target two regions had exceeded the national average for their increase in: percentage points of student enrolment, student GER, female GER, female ratio to all students, and pass rate of the final examination for the primary education certificate (Certificat de Fin d'Etudes du Premier Degré: CFPED). It cannot be asserted if they are impacts caused as a result of the project because there have been many intervening factors, but it is worth adding them here for the record.

(1) Quantitative impacts

(a) Student enrolment and GER

Out of 67 schools which the Ex-Post Evaluation team visited, reliable data on student enrolment was obtained from 63 schools. From them there were 44 schools (70%) whose student enrolment had increased since 2007, whereas at 18 schools (29%) student enrolment had decreased and at one school (2%) no change has been observed.

For the period from 2006/07 to 2008/09, student enrolment in Tahoua Region increased by 36.8% and GER increased from 52.3% (sixth place from eight regions) to 67.6% (fourth place), an increase of 15.3 percentage points. During the same period in Zinder Region student enrolment increased by 30.1% and GER increased from 48.6% (seventh place) to 59.8% (seventh place), an increase of 11.2 percentage points.

Table 6 Increase in Enrolment and Enrolment Rate (School year 2006/07 – 2008/09)

Educational Indicators	Tahoua Region	Zinder Region	National Average
Increase in Enrolment (%) (from 2006/07 to 2008/09)	36.8 (207,616 to 284,004)	30.1 (192 966 to 251,136)	25.8 (1,235,065 to 1,554,270)
Increase in Enrolment Rate (percentage points)	15.3	11.2	10.8

Source: Ex-Post Evaluation Team

In the country as a whole, student enrolment increased by 25.8% and GER increased from 57.1% to 67.8%, an increase of 10.8 percentage points. So the student enrolment rate and the increase in GER percentage points in the two target regions outperformed the national average.

(b) Female GER and female ratio to all students

Out of 67 schools which the Ex-Post Evaluation team visited, reliable data on female student enrolment was obtained from 63 schools. From them there were 36 schools (57%) where a female student ratio to all students had increased since 2007, whereas at 26 schools (41%) female student ratio has decreased and at one school (2%) no change has been observed.

For the period from 2006/07 to 2008/09, in Tahoua Region the female GER increased from 37.2% (seventh place) to 52.8% (sixth place), an increase of 15.6 percentage points. The female ratio to all students also increased from 35.1% to 38.5%, an increase of 3.4 percentage points. For the same period in Zinder Region GER increased from 42.0% (sixth place) to 54.0% (fifth place), an increase of 12.0 percentage points. The female ratio to all students ratio increased from 43.4% to 45.3%, an increase of 1.9 percentage points.

Table 7 Increase in Female GER and Female Ratio to All Students
(% Point, 2006/07-2008/09)

Educational Indicators	Tahoua Region	Zinder Region	National Average
Female Student Enrolment	15.6	12.0	11.2
Female Ratio to All Students	3.4	1.9	1.6

Source: Ex-Post Evaluation Team

In the country as a whole, the GER increased from 47.4% to 58.6%, an increase of 11.2 percentage points and the female ratio to all students ratio increased from 41.5% to 43.1%, an increase of 1.6 percentage points. So the percentage point increase in GER and female ratio to all students ratio in the target two regions outperformed the national average.

(c) Pass rate of CFPED

Out of 67 schools which the Ex-Post Evaluation team visited, reliable data on the pass rate of CFPED was obtained from 53 schools. From them there were 39 schools (74%) whose pass rate has increased or remained at 100% since 2007, whereas there were 14 schools (26%) whose pass rate had decreased.

For the period from 2006/07 to 2008/09, in Tahoua Region the pass rate of CFPED increased from 37.8% (last place) to 52.5% (sixth place), an increase of 14.7 percentage points. For the same period in Zinder Region the pass rate increased from 52.0% (first place) to 67.2% (first place), an increase of 15.2 percentage points.

Table 8 Increase in Pass Rate of CFPED (% Point, 2006/07-2008/09)

Educational Indicator	Tahoua Region	Zinder Region	National Average
Pass Rate of CFPED	14.7	15.2	10.7

Source: Ex-Post Evaluation Team

In the country as a whole the pass rate increased from 42.6% to 53.3%, an increase of 10.7 percentage points. So the pass rate percentage point increase in the two target regions outperformed the national average.

(2) Qualitative impacts

Qualitative impacts were not stipulated in the PDM, however the following points were recorded through interviews with COGES and FCC members; they are far-reaching influences that go beyond normal school and education sector boundaries.

(a) Empowerment of schools through COGESs and FCCs

Schools used to be isolated and powerless entities before COGESs were set up or started functioning. However, after people who had been interested in and responsible for education

were organized as COGES members, they became able to think themselves, take necessary actions and make due requests to the government officials (primarily inspectors and COGES officers). So stakeholders around a school not only had a greater sense of ownership but also became more vocal by collecting and expressing their own opinions.

It is worth noting that FCCs linked every school together which all had previously had no interaction with each other. FCCs, composed of 12 elected COGES members, made this networking of schools possible. A FCC, basically, held general meetings three times a year where it calls for all COGESs in the commune to attend. A general meeting works in the following ways: implementation of school activity plans are monitored, new government policies and campaigns are announced, and common problems facings schools are discussed.

(b) Unity reinforcement in a community

The introduction of a democratic election system made an enormous impact on the traditional societies, with this system creating a new group of people and specifically (except a commune mayor) COGES members are only selected by election. No other government sector has this system, so consequently COGES members have pride that they are elected by people in fair election; while at the same time people in the locality trust them and visit them for advice even on non-educational issues.

So COGESs have served as a catalyst bring about various positive influences; some COGES members say that based on the relationship of trust strengthened through the implementation of school activity plans, people have become more united and willing to work together on community problems beyond a school's normal perimeters and responsibilities.

No negative social impacts caused by the project were observed, however the continued existence of FCCs may become an economic burden on COGESs and communities (discussed in “3.5 Sustainability”).

Thus after this project was implemented some educational indicators were improved in quantitative terms and positive social changes were observed in qualitative terms. The scale of such improvements or changes would never be small.

3.5 Sustainability (Rating: b)

3.5.1 Related Policy and Institutional Sustainability

In PDDE 2002-2012 it placed value on a COGES policy as part of a vehicle for improving educational management, with two ministerial decrees concerning regulations on the establishing and operation of COGESs and FCCs being promulgated in November 2005 and in

October 2008 respectively; so sustainability has been ensured in policy and in institutional aspect.

The ministerial decree stipulates that a COGES election should take place every year with re-election permitted up to once, but the Ex-Post Evaluation team found that only 23 schools (38%) out of the 61 schools from which they obtained reliable data implemented an election in the school year of 2009/10[50]. From the remaining schools, 36 schools (59%) had an election in the school year of either 2007/08 or 2008/09, and 2 schools (3%) have had no election except for the very first one; in these 2 schools, the same members had continued working without an election because they had been performing well.

Such a situation will not develop into a major problem in the short-term, but if it becomes a normal mode of operation it may increase the risk of returning to traditional gerontocracy ways, making COGESs inflexible and inactive, and merely titular.

3.5.2 Organizational Sustainability

The organizational foundation of the central government is relatively weak as described below, while at a regional and district levels it is relatively solid.

According to the preliminary study report's project document issued in January 2004, the Secretary General of MEB/A (later renamed as MEN) is the Project Director, the Director of the Department of Planning is the Project Manager, and then the primary counterpart is the Coordinator of C.P.COGES. At a regional level the Directors of the Regional Office of Education and COGES supervisors are also project counterparts, and at a district level the COGES officers and inspectors are the people who worked most closely with the project.

The weakness in the organization and capacity of C.P.COGES was pointed out in the project's terminal evaluation report. According to one expert, from Japan, on Phase 2 of the project, the coordinator of C.P.COGES is only the person who has the ability of policy-making although there were several C.P.COGES officers. This is a fact that applies to other departments in MEN too.

Whereas education officers at the regional and district levels contact each other and take care of COGES-related activities on top of their routine work. Directors of IEB attend meetings, monthly, convened by Directors of a Regional Office of Education and COGES officers attend meetings convened by a COGES supervisor at a Regional Office of Education.

There is only one COGES officer assigned to each district, as there are many schools which are located far and wide within each district the officer cannot visit a vast number of schools; so it is inspectors who actually visit the schools. Each inspector is usually in charge of two or three

[50] In Niger a school year begins in October and ends in September.

communes including the one commune where they are living. To be an inspector the official examination must be passed, while there is no examination to be a COGES supervisor (at the regional level) or a COGES officer (at the district level). In actual fact those who are in the two COGES-related positions are among many other education officers, so between them there are often huge gaps in working capabilities.

3.5.3 Technical Sustainability

The capacity of central government counterparts has remained at a low level as described below, counterparts' capacity at the sub-national level is not adequate either but it is expected to improve gradually as they continue visiting COGESs and FCCs for monitoring and supervision.

From the early stages of this project it fully utilized a local NGO – the Organisation Nigerienne des Educateurs Novateurs (ONEN) – with four of ONEN's staff members even at the time of this report working full-time for Phase 2 of the project. ONEN's staff members are familiar with not only French but also the local language of Hausa, so their support was indispensable when conducting the training series – in Hausa – for government officers and stakeholders around schools. The use of this NGO was understandable because the project was required to produce a certain visible outputs within the limited period of three years.

It is however considered that ONEN staff members in particular took charge of the tasks which government officials (in C.P.COGES, Regional Office of Education and IEB) should have assumed i.e., it is undeniable that ONEN staff members played a role of quasi-counterparts while receiving fees several times higher than the salaries of government officials. When the Japanese experts for Phase 2 of the project first met the Coordinator of C.P.COGES, he told them that this project "belonged to JICA and ONEN, not to MEN"; this comment simply indicates to what extent MEN's sense of ownership towards the project was.

At the sub-national, especially the district level, COGES officers and inspectors regularly visited COGESs and FCCs for monitoring and supervision under the sound guidance of IEB, and their capacity was enhanced through this continuous effort. The Japanese experts working in Niger at the time of this report came up with the idea that it is essential to develop the capacity of government officials at the sub-national level as they will gradually reduce the degree of dependence on, or collaboration with, ONEN staff members.

3.5.4 Financial Sustainability

MEN's COGES-related budget was insufficient, and unstable financial sustainability is a concern as described below. COGESs have, in contrast to MEN, been able to collect money or flexibly select some activities to be implemented in the cases where the amount of money collected was not enough. FCCs however have been struggling to collect contributions from COGESs and its financial circumstances need to be continually and closely watched.

C.P.COGE has authority over a COGES policy but no budget to provide financial support for COGES activities. MEN allocates from its ministerial budget the operational expenses including monitoring of schools to the Director of IEB and inspectors, and they receive respectively 250,000 FCFA and 150,000 FCFA quarterly, however these expenses were suspended from October 2009; so inspectors who were visiting schools were being forced to pay their own motorcycle fuel costs.

In contrast, COGES officers, COGES supervisors and Directors of Regional Office of Education reliably received operational expenses, which originated from the counterpart fund of the Japanese grant aid program[51]. Every month COGES officers receive 40,000 FCFA, which they utilize exclusively for fuel for getting to COGESs and FCCs so they can monitor and supervise them[52]. However, the counterpart fund is not an eternal financial resource so this payment will come to an end in the foreseeable future. The counterpart fund is controlled by a fund management committee composed of MEN, JICA Niger Office and Phase 2 of the project, and they are all aware that the fund is not eternal.

The COGESs collect money (annually 500-1,000 FCFA per student) from parents and villagers, and FCCs collect contributions (annually around 3,000 FCFA) from each COGES in a commune. In simple terms, a COGES makes a school activity plan every year and decides the amount of money required from an individual or a family by dividing the total activity costs by the number of students, but the total amount of revenue collected usually remains between 60-70 percent of that required. Instead of, or on top of, the cash contributions these stakeholders also contribute building materials such as thatch and wood, but if all these are insufficient a COGES has to exclude the activities that have relatively low priority.

While some FCCs consider the municipal government (commune) to be part of their fund source when they make an activity plan, others do not consider it that way and only ask for assistance from a commune, private companies and benefactors when they cannot collect their targeted amount from the COGESs contributions. The Ex-Post Evaluation team found that, in seven FCCs out of 14 FCCs (six in Tahoua and eight in Zinder) which they visited, FCC members made private contributions to compensate for shortfalls; they also found that four FCCs (two in Tahoua and two in Zinder) had difficulty collecting contributions from COGESs.

[51] The counterpart fund is a compulsorily accumulated reserve fund established in recipient countries of Japan's food aid, grant aid for increased food production, and non-project grant aid. A recipient country's government holds the fund in a local bank account (in its own national currency) and the interest accumulated from this fund is equivalent to the amount needed to purchase goods and materials. A recipient country in consultation with Japan utilizes the fund for the implementation of projects, and the purchasing of goods and materials, which are projected to contribute to its economic and social development.

[52] The details of monitoring fees per month are as follows: 100,000 FCFA is allocated to the monitoring activities conducted by the Regional Office of Education, 100,000 FCFA to a COGES supervisor (90,000 FCFA for fuel and 10,000 FCFA for motorbike maintenance); and 50,000 FCFA to a COGES officer (40,000 FCFA for fuel and 10,000 FCFA for motorbike maintenance. Besides, 26,400 FCFA is allocated to COGES officers for the preparation of monthly meetings.

Thus 11 (79%) out of 14 FCCs have been struggling to collect contributions to implement their activities. As FCCs are still young (three or four years old), their financial foundations have yet to be firmly established.

3.5.5 Continued Effects of the Project

COGESs are far from omnipotent but they have been more effective in two of the target regions, rather than in the others, in that they keep school based management with community participation in a sustainable manner as described below.

The same team visited 19 schools (12 in Dosso and seven in Tahoua) for another objective (the Project's Ex-Post Evaluation of Classroom Construction in the Departments of Dosso and Tahoua [Grant Aid]). Three schools (one in Dosso and two in Tahoua) out of 19 were found to be almost paralyzed due to the interpersonal problems, such as antagonism between teachers and villagers, and conflicts among villagers. Regardless of the views that this number would be large or small, this fact implies that a COGES system is not self-contained and that incessant support and supervision from outsiders, especially the government officials, are indispensable in keeping it functioning.

Out of 67 schools which the team visited, reliable data on the number of school activities occurring was obtained from 48 schools (27 in Tahoua and 21 in Zinder). The average number of school activities was 4.8 in Tahoua and 4.0 in Zinder, whereas it was 3.8 in Dosso which was a non-target region and despite the small sample size, the two target regions turned out to have more school activities. The team also looked at real documentation of schools' activity plans, and found that schools in the two regions had more minutely elaborate plans compared to schools in Dosso where the documents looked more like shopping lists than school activity plans.

Making a school activity plan and its implementation are placed at the center of a COGES's activities. Actually the construction and maintenance of the buildings and the purchase of materials took up the largest percentage of the total budget. It was revealed by the terminal evaluation team for Phase 2 of the project that these accounted for 50-60% of the entire budget. Therefore, even if there are a certain or relatively high number of activities, they will not always be linked with improving the quality of education in the school.

In light of these, the counterpart organization (MEN) has concerns about its financial circumstances; therefore the sustainability of the project is fair.

4 Conclusion, Recommendations and Lessons Learned

4.1 Conclusion

The relevance of the project has been evaluated as high because it was consistent with Niger's development policy and needs as well as Japan's aid policy. The effectiveness coupled with the impact of the project has been evaluated as high; this was because the project purpose was in the majority achieved, but a new output added at the mid-term review was not achieved, although positive changes in quantitative and qualitative terms after the implementation of the project were observed in and around the schools. The efficiency of the project has been evaluated as fair because a newly-added output seemed quite challenging and was not achieved, even after a seven-month extension. The sustainability of the project has been evaluated as fair because MEN and FCCs' financial foundations for strengthening and monitoring COGESs still have plenty of room for improvement. In light of the above, this project is evaluated to be satisfactory.

4.2 Recommendations

4.2.1 Recommendations to the Executing Agency

(1) Monitoring of COGESs follow-the-rule orderliness

Some of COGESs had not implemented a democratic election or even if they had they kept the same members re-elected for years, which is a violation of the COGES rules. MEN needs to manage the actual situation of how to apply the ministerial decrees so that they are obeyed by the COGESs, through monitoring sub-national government officials (COGES officers and inspectors). If an annual election is too frequent and burdensome for COGESs then MEN can amend its rules, for instance by making an interval every two years or more. In this case it would be necessary to include a provision that prohibits members' re-election in a COGES, to prevent the lengthening of the same members' tenure and the resulting immobilization of the COGES.

(2) Document control and storage

In all the schools that the Ex-Post Evaluation team visited, it was observed that documents went missing after a principal had been transferred to another school. It is expected that with the correct control and storage of documents – which enable a COGES to check the transition of the students enrolled and the school's past activity plans – will help a COGES make better plans and implement its activities more smoothly. Since the proper management of documents does not cost anything and can be implemented without extra effort, it will be beneficial for all COGESs to be informed and instructed to do so under a MEN initiative.

4.2.2 Recommendations to JICA

(1) Strengthening of FCCs' financial capacity and checkup of FFCs' function

FCCs are financially dependent on COGESs to a great extent and have difficulty collecting contributions from COGESs (as mentioned in "3.5 Sustainability"). It is as a result necessary to reinforce the financial foundation of FCCs and specifically, that JICA provide, under current and future technical cooperation, assistance to increase the collection rate of contributions from COGESs and diversify funding resources, other than that of a COGESs, in a commune. If it turns out to be difficult for FCCs to be financially viable there may be an option for the government organization to assume as their own tasks, a part of FCCs' roles, such as the organization of general COGES meetings and monitoring of the implementation of school activity plans. In order to understand this option, MEN needs to obtain a better understanding of the situation at the localities and it is also expected that JICA would help them strengthen a smooth and consistent reporting system, through which they would relay information from schools to sub-national governments at the commune, district and regional level to central government.

(2) Strengthening of collaboration among COGESs, FCCs and government bodies

In order for COGESs and FCCs to develop themselves in a sustainable manner it is important for them to have a collaborative relationship with government bodies, achieving this through exchanges of opinions and information sharing. One vital point is to strengthen relationships with their IEB (Director, inspectors, and COGES officers) because they are physically close to them. It is also important for FCCs to have a close association with its commune (municipal government) because they need to receive financial support from it continually. So JICA can still assist by linking the stakeholders of COGESs, FCCs, IEB and a commune at the district or lower level, also involving MEN and the Regional Offices of Education.

4.3 Lessons Learned

(1) Significance of modeling and areal and quantitative expansion

This project developed a simplified COGES model and disseminated it not only to the original target of 60 schools in Tahoua Region, but also to all the nearly 2,800 primary schools in the two Regions (1,300 in Tahoua and 1,500 in Zinder) as a result of the modification of the PDM at the mid-term review. As the areal and quantitative expansion was so great – such was the appeal of the project to the Nigerien Government and other donors – the significance of the project implementation was greatly enhanced and as a direct result even the presence of JICA/Japan was greatly increased. A technical cooperation project like this, which develops a model of a certain system or institution, should desirably be designed to accommodate more

factors in broader areas rather than fewer in smaller areas. If it seems to be too risky to set such a lofty goals or targets, a project can be initiated on a modest scale and then expand itself gradually depending on its progress.

In the case of this project there was the Nigerien Government's policy change (from increasing COGESs by one thousand every year to making COGES compulsory in all schools nationwide) in April 2005, which JICA strongly supported and the dissemination of the projects COGES model was propelled by other donors' assistance including a World Bank's loan. Several manuals on a COGES set-up and management developed by the project were explained to, and shared among, participants in monthly donor meetings. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and European Union (EU) started utilizing them for their activities. It should be noted that the model was disseminated through a complicated but collaborative process.

(2) Necessity for review of project period and inputs, and correct target setting

In this project the new output added at the mid-term review turned out to be too challenging and was not achieved even after a seven month extension of the cooperation period, after which this challenge was seamlessly taken over by the Phase 2 of the project starting from August 2007. To summarize – if not taking into account the level of difficulty – the period set for this project was too short to produce this output. The rating of the efficiency of the project therefore was reduced to "b", meaning that evaluation results vary depending on the levels set for the project in its purpose and outputs. When the contents, levels and indicators are reviewed in the course of the project it is imperative to pay utmost attention to their levels that should be newly targeted, while taking into consideration the remaining cooperation period and the volume of inputs.

Some modifications were made in the PDM at the time of the mid-term review as mentioned earlier. However, little evidence was found in the report that a study was completed as to: whether the inputs should have been augmented to achieve the project purpose and outputs for the remaining period, and whether the cooperation period should have been extended in line with these augmented inputs. Consequently, regardless of cases where the PDM is modified or not, it is necessary to examine whether the originally fixed period of cooperation and inputs were appropriate to achieve the project purpose and outputs. And if inappropriate (inadequate) it should be a requirement that, as early as possible, it is decided how long the period should be extended and/or how much the volume of inputs should be increased by.

(3) Utilization of local NGOs

This project made effective and efficient use of a local NGO that was familiar with the local language and geography, however, the more local NGOs are utilized the greater the risk of lowering the counterpart organization's sense of ownership. So when utilizing a local NGO, a

project can take maximum advantage of it during the early stages but the project should gradually reduce its use or dependence on the NGO as the counterpart organization builds up its capacity. To do this practically, it is possible to lessen the workload of an NGO and/or reduce the number of NGO staff members working for the project.

(4) Institution building with capacity development

Institution building is a difficult task, still what is fundamentally important is the capacity development of counterpart personnel who continuously scrutinize and amend it in response to changes in the needs of the society at the locality. Model development and institution building do not terminate with the project's completion, so counterpart personnel should be equipped with the necessary skills to complete regular reviews. There are no shortcuts in capacity development; the only way is to have sensitization and transfer of expertise to them through daily activities. In addition to these it would be advantageous to incorporate a device or condition in a system that facilitates its own regulation, specifically one can put into a ministerial decree e.g., a provision that a thorough examination must be conducted every three years in order to obligate a periodical review of the matter in question.

The Republic of Niger

Ex-Post Evaluation of Japanese Grant Aid Project

"Le Projet de Construction des Salles de Classe de l'Enseignement Primaire dans les Départements de Dosso et de Tahoua"

External Evaluators: Satoru Takahashi, Shimako Narahara, IMG. Inc.

1 Overview of the Project

The Republic of Niger

Birni Quartier School in Dosso

1.1 Background

The Republic of Niger (hereafter referred to as Niger) is one of the poorest countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, also having the lowest percentage of its population in education in the world. In 2000, Niger's primary education net enrolment rate was 34% and its adult literacy rate was 15.7%. Disparities in basic education between Regions and gender were widespread.

In order to improve the situation in the education sector the government of Niger introduced the Basic Education Law in 1998 and Ten-Year Education Development Program 2002 - 2012 (Programme Décennal de Développement de l'Education de Niger: PDDE) in 2001. The latter aims, through the construction and renovation of classrooms (among other policies), to enroll 70% of all children by 2012.

Against this background the Government of Japan dispatched a Basic Design Study (B/D) team in 2002 in response to a request by the Government of Niger for the construction of primary school classrooms. The exchange of notes (E/N) was officially signed by both governments in 2003 with the final stage of the project being completed in 2005.

1.2 Project Outline

The project was aimed at providing 9,250 students with a comfortable learning environment to study in, by constructing and renovating 185 schoolrooms at 52 primary schools in Dosso and Tahoua Regions[53] where primary school enrollment rates were low. In Dosso and Tahoua, there were more hand-made thatched-roof/straw-walled classrooms[54] than in other Regions in Niger.

Planned amount / Actual amount		Stage 1 : 705 million yen / 704.6 million yen Stage 2 : 326 million yen / 323.41 million yen
Exchange of Notes (E/N)		Stage 1 : 20 June 2003 Stage 2 : 29 June 2004
Executing Agency		Ministry of Basic Education and Literacy (now reorganized as the Ministry of National Education)
Project Completion		1 October 2005
Companies Involved	Contractor	Toda Corporation
	Consultant	Daiken Sekkei. Inc.
Basic Design		March 2002
Detail Design		Stage 1 : January 2004 Stage 2 : December 2004
Related Projects		• JICA Technical Cooperation Project, "The Project on Support to the Improvement of School Management through Community Participation (School for All)"[55] Phase 1, was supporting COGES[56] in primary schools in Tahoua and Zinder Regions. The project duration was from January 2004 to July 2007. • At the time of the B/D, the World Bank was implementing Projet Sectoriel de l'Enseignement Fondamental (PROSEF) and was in the process of designing a successor project. Likewise, European Union (EU), African Development Bank, Agence Française de Développement (AFD) were supporting or planning to support Niger with the construction and/or renovation of primary school classrooms as well as with school management.

2 Outline of the Evaluation Study

2.1 External Evaluators

Satoru Takahashi, IMG. Inc.

Shimako Narahara, IMG. Inc.

[53] When the B/D of the project was conducted, the administrative units for Dosso and Tahoua were called "Departments". In 2002, Departments were renamed "Regions" based on the government's decentralization policy. In the current system, a Department is a smaller administrative unit than a Region (a Region consists of Departments).
[54] Hereafter referred to as thatched classroom(s).
[55] Hereafter referred to as the "School for All project".
[56] COGES stands for Comité de Gestion des Etablissements Scolaires (School Management Committee). A COGES consists of representatives of parents and teachers and is responsible for the basic maintenance of school facilities and management of a school, as well as the provision of school materials. Since April 2005, through a ministerial order, all primary schools in Niger were required to organize a COGES.

2.2 Duration of the Evaluation Study

Duration of the Study: October 2009 - September 2010

Duration of the Field Study: March 13th - April 11th, 2010

2.3 Constraints during the Evaluation Study

The project sites are situated in a wide range of locations in Dosso and Tahoua Regions. Travel restrictions to visit some parts of Niger were placed when the field study was conducted, due to recent security concerns including suspected activities of Al-Quaeda linked groups. The Ex-Post Evaluation team was prohibited from visiting some of the departments/cities where project schools were located, including Tahoua City and Tahoua Department. To conduct the field survey the Ex-Post Evaluation team randomly selected 19 project schools as samples from locations in unrestricted areas. Most of the qualitative data used to analyze effectiveness, impact and sustainability of the project was obtained from the information gathered at these sample schools.

The Ex-Post Evaluation team collected as much quantitative data as possible from the sample schools as well as from the Educational Inspector's Offices (Inspection de l'Enseignement de Base: IEB) which supervise these schools. However, much of the basic information needed was not systematically kept either at the schools or, in a considerable number of cases, by the IEBs. The failure of data management by the IEBs can partly be attributed to Niger's decentralization policy, through which many of the existing IEBs have been divided into two or more IEBs, with the then existing IEBs not properly providing the information to the newly created IEBs about the schools that they had become responsible for. As a result, at many project sites, it was difficult to obtain a comprehensive set of data to assess "before the project and after the project" quantitative differences. The Ex-Post Evaluation team decided to use for the evaluation data collected in the form of documented record which were obtained from IEBs or sample schools, and thus deemed as reliable.

3 Results of the Evaluation (Rating: C)

3.1 Relevance (Rating: a)

3.1.1 Relevance with the Nigerien Government Policies for Development

The project was consistent with the government policies of Niger at the time of the B/D as well as at the time of the Ex-Post Evaluation for the following reasons:

Niger enacted the Basic Education Law in 1998, which aspired to improve people's access to education, the quality of education, and the literacy rate. In its Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper

(PRSP) in 2001, the government identified the educational sector as one important area within the social sector. PDDE 2002-2012, formulated in 2001, mapped out the strategies to realize the Basic Education Law objectives and has been functioning within the PRSP framework. PDDE was also expected to contribute to poverty reduction and human development. PDDE aimed to increase gross primary education enrolment from 34% in 2000 to 70% in 2012. As one of the measures to achieve this goal, it planned to construct 19,385 classrooms and to renovate 6,701 classrooms. PDDE was split into three phases (phase I 2002-2007, Phase II 2007-2010 and Phase III 2010-2013), all of which prioritized the improvement of access to basic education.

3.1.2 Relevance with Development Needs

Niger is one of the poorest countries in the world with a Human Development Index (HDI) ranking of 172 out of 173 countries in 2000; of the three HDI components Niger's education index at 0.16 was significantly lower than those of the other two components, with a GDP index of 0.34 and a life expectancy index of 0.34[57]. In the latest HDI (2007) Niger ranked 182 out of 182 countries, but there had been some improvement compared to 2000 in the education index, now at 0.282, although it was still lower than the GDP index of 0.307 and life expectancy index of 0.432 [58]. The level of basic education in Niger was ranked amongst the lowest in the world: according to a UNESCO report (2000) in 1996 Niger's enrolment rate (29%) was much lower than those of neighboring countries such as Mali (49%), Burkina Faso (40%), and Chad (57%)[59]. Niger's enrolment rate improved to 34% in 2000[60], yet still remained at the lowest level in Sub-Saharan Africa[61].

The B/D listed the following contributing factors for the low enrolment rate in basic education: absolute insufficiency of educational facilities, dilapidated or poorly-structured[62] classrooms, and lack of basic equipment such as students' desks and chairs. Other factors that also affected the enrolment rate included the very limited capacity of teachers, lack of teachers, and inadequate school management[63]. As to inadequate school management, the B/D pointed out that more often than not parents (who were supposed to be the main people to manage and maintain schools) were alienated from school management.

In Dosso and Tahoua Regions where the project was carried out, the enrolment rates in 2000 were very low at 36.9% in Dosso and 29.5% in Tahoua. As a comparison in the capital city, Niamey, the rate was nearly 100%. The B/D found that in these two Regions the proportional

[57] UNDP, Human Development Report 2002
[58] UNDP, Human Development Report 2009
[59] p1-5, Basic Design Study Report
[60] Statistics on Basic Education 1999/2000, the government of Niger (cited in Basic Design Study Report, p1-5)
[61] The enrolment rate of Sub-Saharan African countries as a whole in 2000 was 80.3% (UNESCO Institute of Statistics).
[62] Such as thatched classrooms.
[63] For example, there were reported cases that school principals did not allow some children to be enrolled in order to avoid overcrowding of classrooms.

amount of thatched classrooms was higher than in other Regions in the country and yet hardly any support was being provided by other donors.

The Ex-Post Evaluation confirmed that there had been a drastic increase in the enrolment rates in the target Regions since 2000. In 2008/09, the enrolment rate in Dosso was 71.9% and in Tahoua 67.6%[64]. Schools had to accommodate an ever increasing number of children, thus the necessity for classroom construction has been an issue that has continued to remain pressing.

The request from the government of Niger for the project had included the construction of classrooms for secondary schools. However, the B/D concluded that there was no persuasive reason to include secondary school construction in the project and decided to carry out construction and renovation of only primary schools. Examining the B/D's decision, the Ex-Post Evaluation found that in 2 rural schools, out of the 19 sample schools, there were problems with the graduates of the primary schools because of a lack of secondary schools in the villages. Many of the graduates who proceeded to the secondary schools in neighboring towns had dropped out, which has made community members including their parents and younger siblings feel that education, primary or secondary, is meaningless (i.e., not being of any benefit to children). The parents' disappointment/disillusionment with the education system itself has in turn resulted in their reluctance to send their younger children to primary school. The two schools have suffered from a decrease in the number of students over the last few years and the IEBs that supervise these schools have started to recognize these problems[65]. Despite this new problem found, the unmet need for primary education was, and still is, acute in the target areas and has necessitated it being treated as a priority by the education sectors in these areas. Thus, the Ex-Post Evaluation team concludes that the B/D's decision to concentrate on primary schools was relevant.

3.1.3 Relevance with Japan's ODA policy

In both the Official Development Assistance (ODA) Charter (2003), and the Medium Term Policy on ODA (2005), which form the policy basis for Japanese development cooperation, Japan places priority on education as an important sector to be supported. It identifies the support for the education sector as a main priority under its poverty reduction policy.

In 2002, Japan announced "Basic Education for Growth Initiative" (BEGIN) at the Kananaskis Summit, identifying its strategy to support basic education in developing countries, giving due consideration to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the Education for All (EFA) - Dakar Framework for Action, both of which were adopted globally in 2000. For BEGIN Japan

[64] Statistics on Basic Education 2008/09, the government of Niger

[65] The IEBs considered opinion is that children drop out from secondary schools because, in most cases, the schools are far from home and children consequently have to live away from their families, which makes them unstable, giving them difficulties with concentrating on their studies.

pledged over 250 billion yen in assistance for education to be provided for low-income countries over five years (starting in 2002)[66].

Japan's commitment toward improving Africa's educational sector has clearly been demonstrated by its proactive contributions, outlined in a series of Tokyo International Conference on Africa Development (TICAD) beginning with TICAD I in 1993. TICAD II took place in 1998 and TICAD III in 2003 (the same year as the B/D). In TICAD IV in 2008 Japan reiterated the importance of improving access to basic education in Africa and committed itself to construct 1,000 primary/secondary schools there (approximately 5,500 classrooms in total).

Having recognized the dire need for primary education facilities in Niger, Japan constructed a total of 235 classrooms[67] in Fiscal Years (FYs) 1993 and 1996 (i.e., prior to this project). After this project, another classroom construction project named Le Projet de Construction de Salles de Classe dans les Regions de Maradi et de Zinder had been implemented in 253 primary schools in Maradi and Zinder Regions and was still underway at the time of the Ex-Post Evaluation[68].

As discussed above, the project has been highly relevant with the Nigerien government policies for educational development, the development needs in target Regions, and the Japan's ODA policy; therefore the relevance of the project is high.

3.2 Efficiency (Rating: b)

3.2.1 Project Outputs

From the original plan in the B/D, three classroom buildings (eight classrooms) and four latrine buildings (12 pit latrines) were cancelled as it was found during the Detailed Design Study that these facilities had already been constructed by the Nigerien government, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), or other donors[69]. After this revision, the project constructed or renovated 185 classrooms, constructed 49 latrine buildings (147 pit latrines) and provided 9,250 student desk-and-chairs[70] (50 sets for 185 classrooms) in 52 primary schools (see Table 1).

[66] Supporting the Joy: Japan's Support for Education of Leaning, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
[67] Out of the 235 classrooms, eight in FY 1993 were secondary school classrooms.
[68] The B/D of the project was submitted in December 2006.
[69] 1 school (3 classrooms planned) was excluded from the plan as an NGO had already constructed classrooms at the time of the Detailed Design Study. In 5 schools at which the government/donors/NGOs had constructed classrooms, the number of classrooms to be constructed by this project was reduced by 1 classroom each. Latrine buildings: 4 schools (including the school which was excluded from the project) were found to have latrines built by other donors/NGOs, thus the project decided not to build latrine buildings at these locations.
[70] The desk and the chair are attached to each other in one combination unit, made from plywood with a steel frame.

Table 1 Comparison between the planned and actual project outputs

	Schools	Classrooms	Latrine buildings	Pit latrines
Planned (B/D)	53	194	53	159
Actual	52	185	49	147

Source: B/D and Project Completion Reports

The design standards of the classroom construction conformed to Nigerien national building standards and regulations. Beneficiaries both at policy level and at the localities (Ministry of National Education, IEBs, school principals and teachers, and parents) acknowledged that the quality of the project classrooms was either equal to or higher than that of the classrooms constructed by the government and/or other donors, and that the project classrooms require minimal maintenance (which was highly appreciated by the beneficiaries).

During the field visits, many principals and COGES members made positive comments especially about: the solid foundations of the project classrooms; and that the construction work had been monitored far more frequently and carefully than with other organizations' projects.

However, one interviewee[71] commented that the design of the schools constructed by MCC (Millennium Challenge Corporation, an independent USA foreign and agency with USA government backing) was better than that of this project in terms of providing more comfortable educational environments for the students. The MCC classrooms have open spaces between classrooms where it is airy (see Photo 2). This space is relatively cool and comfortable, which is valuable in the severely hot climate of Niger. Using these spaces, students can play between classes, and teachers and COGES members can work after school[72]. An additional advantage is that the open space could be transformed into a closed classroom with straw walls when/if the number of students of the school increases and another classroom is required.

Photo 1 Typical classroom building constructed by the project (Konni Department, Tahoua Region)

Photo 2 Classroom building constructed by MCC

[71] An officer in charge of education facilities at an IEB in Konni Department in Tahoua Region.
[72] Some aid agency officers, however, indicated that MCC-style classroom buildings, which require more space to be built, may not be suitable in crowded urban locations, while they are suitable in rural areas where it is easier to secure land.

Defects in the school buildings: from the 19 schools that the Ex-Post Evaluation team visited, 13 schools (68%) had broken hinges and/or locks on the classroom doors and/or windows and 5 schools (26%) had broken door hinges on the latrines. The problem may be attributable to the use of cheap low-quality materials, as well as to rough handling by the teachers and students, although it was impossible to identify which was the determining factor for the breakages in each case.

In 12 schools out of the 19 schools (63%), bats have nested in the space between the roof and the ceiling causing problems such as: their chirping being noisy during classes, and their excrement that produces an unpleasant odor and that has leaked out down the walls. All of these disturb students' concentration on their classes. As not all the schools visited suffered from the problems with bats problems, it is unlikely that there was a flaw in the design of the construction itself. The field research revealed that bats have most likely entered the building through the narrow gap(s) that have formed in the plaster that was used to fill the space between the joists and the outer walls (see Photo 3). Two schools[73] reported that the problems started directly after the completion of construction, this indicates the possibility of shoddy workmanship, such as not putting sufficient plaster around the joists.

Photo 3 Narrow gap observed between the joist and the wall
(Konni Department, Tahoua Region)

In 13 schools out of the 19 schools, many students desk-and-chairs (in some cases 75-100%) provided by the project had problems. Typical problems were: screws had come out (Photo 4) and the surface of desk/chairs had peeled off (Photo 5). The Ex-Post Evaluation team observed many desks being used had screws missing, sometimes meaning that the top boards had come loose from the steel frames (as Photo 4 shows), which is dangerous as (for example) students may slip off the chairs.

[73] The remaining 10 schools were unable to identify when the bats started to invade, as the principals working at the time of the completion of construction had been transferred and the information/reports on the problems were not kept.

Photo 4 Desk-and-chair being used with the screws off

Photo 5 Surface of the desk peeled off

The problem with the screws was thought to be caused mainly by the students who would play with and loosen the screws, as the screw heads were exposed on the top surfaces in the boards of both the desk and chair parts. Some of the schools had other types of desk-and-chairs provided either by the government or by other donors, these screws of which were placed not on the top surfaces but on the sides of the furniture; very few of these desks have had a problem with screws. The damage to the surfaces (peeling-off) of the boards was apparently caused by children's vandalism. By contrast, the surfaces of the solid planked desk-and-chairs provided by the government were not seriously damaged. Thus, the surface damage of the desk-and-chairs provided by the project could be attributed to plywood being used.

The Ex-Post Evaluation team observed in a few schools that the blackboards, two of which were placed on the walls of every project classroom, developed cracks in their surfaces. This may be attributable to the use of a wet cloth for cleaning (commonly practiced in Niger), damage from which is not offset with regular repainting.

3.2.2 Project Inputs

3.2.2.1 Project period

The project was implemented in two stages: Stage I (August 2003 – February 2005) and Stage II (August 2004 – October 2005)[74]. The duration of the project, 33 months, was marginally longer than planned in the B/D which was 31.5 months (over 100% and under 125% of the planned amount). Table 2 shows the comparison between the planned and the actual construction periods.

[74] For both stages, the starting month is when the Detail Design Study began and the end month was when the construction was completed.

Table 2 Comparison between the Planned and Actual Construction Periods

	Stage I		Stage II	
	Detailed Design	Construction	Detailed Design	Construction
Planned (B/D)	5.5 months	12 months	5 months	9 months
Actual	6 months	12.5 months	5 months	9.5 months

Source: B/D and Project Completion Reports

The Detailed Design period in Stage I was 0.5 month longer than in the planned period; this was caused by the one-year blank period between the submission of the B/D and E/N which was due to the Iraq war (started March 2003). Because of the time that had elapsed between the B/D and the Detailed Design Study (which could be conducted only after E/N), the situation had changed in some target areas which required the Detailed Design to take more time than expected (than expected at the time of the B/D); this included having to spend time in discussions with the Nigerien government. Additional time delay was added as the bidding date was rescheduled, as the original bidding period had been during the year-end and New Year holiday season. In both Stages I and II, there were half-month blank periods between the contract date and the starting date of construction, which was due again to the year-end and New Year holiday seasons.

3.2.2.2 Project cost

The total project cost was 1,028.01 million yen, which was within the amount stated in the E/N -1031 million yen (99.7% of the planned amount).

There were different views regarding the cost effectiveness of the project within the Ministry of National Education. The Department of Study and Programming (Direction des Etudes et de la Programmation: DEP) argued that the buildings constructed by Japan were more durable and did not require much repair due to their superior quality, and that this compensated for the cost of construction being higher than that of other donors. Conversely the Department of School Infrastructure and Equipment (Direction des Infrastructures et Equipements Scolaires: DIES) claimed that the project cost was too high e.g. a classroom constructed by the World Bank cost approximately one third of one constructed by the Japanese. According to DIES this was because with Japanese grant aid it is required to use a Japanese contractor, although the contractor does use local sub-contractors. DIES argued that, to lower the construction cost, the Japanese government should have allowed the recipient government to directly assign contracts with local companies, which would have with the savings resulted in an increase in the number of classrooms constructed by the project.

Detailed data that should indicate the differences in the quality of the classrooms constructed by the Japanese contractor, local contractors (through domestic bidding), and other donors, was unavailable. At the time of the Ex-Post Evaluation it was also impossible to compare the

durability of the classrooms constructed by different organizations, as only 5 years had passed since the completion of the project. Thus, it is difficult to compare the cost-effectiveness of the classrooms constructed by various different donor projects (including this project) and the government.

Although the project period was slightly longer than planned, the project cost was lower than planned; therefore the efficiency of the project is fair.

3.3 Effectiveness (Rating: b)

3.3.1 Quantitative Effects (Results from Operation Indicators)

In the B/D and the Detailed Design Study, the projected direct effect of the project was to provide approximately 9,250 students with improved learning environments by constructing/renovating 185 classrooms at 52 schools.

Photo 6 Thatched classroom

Photo 7 Class in a thatched classroom

Photo 8 Class in a project classroom

In order to assess to what level the set objectives were achieved, the planned and actual figures on the following indicators were used for comparison:

(1) Number of students learning in the project classrooms

(2) Increases in the number of girl students and the utilization of latrine buildings

(3) Reduction of the economic burden on parents

(4) The soft component implementation status

The Ex-Post Evaluation team selected the above four indicators since in the B/D they were categorized as follows: (1) was the primary numerical indicator to assess the direct effect of the project, (2) and (3) were also emphasized as direct effects indicators of the project, and (4) was a component of the project which should achieve a direct effect ("the maintenance system for the facilities provided by the project is consolidated"[75]).

(1) Number of students learning in the project classrooms

As a planned effect of the project it had been envisaged that upon the completion of the project in 2005, 185 classrooms (either constructed or renovated by the project) would provide 9,250

[75] See p.iii-iv and p4-1 of B/D for the detailed description of the direct effects projected.

students (50 students per classroom) with improved learning environments. While it was impossible to visit some of the project areas due to the travel restrictions (see "2.3 Constraints during the Evaluation Study"), the Ex-Post Evaluation team did examine the number of students learning in the classrooms provided by the project by performing field research at the 19 sample schools (37% of all the project schools), which were all located in unrestricted areas. The evaluation was therefore conducted based on the data obtained from the 19 schools[76] visited.

At the 19 schools, 62 classrooms were constructed/renovated by the project. The set target number of students for the 19 schools was 3,100 (50 students multiplied by 62 classrooms). At the time of the Ex-Post Evaluation 2,429 students were estimated to be learning in these 62 project classrooms, which was 78.35% of the target number. The estimated number of students learning in the total 185 classrooms (52 schools) by using this percentage (78%) against the set target of 9,250 is 7,247; so an additional 2,000 students could be accommodated. Although it was planned that 50 students would be accommodated in each classroom only four schools had 50 or more students, with another four schools having 45 or more students, in the project classrooms at the sample schools. Out of the eight schools above, six were located in the urban areas, and the remaining two schools were located in rural but relatively populous communities which were easily accessible from nearby towns.

In the other eleven schools the project classrooms were not fully utilized at the time of the Ex-Post Evaluation (four years after the project completion), with less than 45 students learning in each project classroom. Out of these eleven schools nine were located in rural areas with only two schools in urban settings[77]. In particular, the project classrooms in four schools (three in rural areas) had less than 25 students per classroom and two of them (both in rural areas) only had 16–17 students per classroom.

Table 3 Average number of students per project classroom in the 19 sample schools

Urban/Rural	Average number of students	Number of schools
Urban	44.9	8
Rural	33.5	11

Source: Ex-Post Evaluation team

As shown above, the level of utilization of the project classrooms (number of the students who are learning in the classrooms) is closely associated with the locations of the schools i.e., whether the school is located in: an urban area, where many children live and thus a school

[76] Including the data obtained from the IEBs that supervise the schools.
[77] "Urban area" hereafter in this report refers to an area that experiences an inflow and growth in population, even if it is not physically located in a city or along a paved road. "Rural area" hereafter in this report refers to an area where population is small and migration into the community hardly occurs, regardless of its physical location (such as located in a city, an administrative unit or close to a paved road).

tends to have many students; or rural area, where the community is small and thus a school tends to have less students.

In the B/D, the construction plan including the number of classrooms at respective schools was made based on the estimations of future population growth in the target Regions: 3.6% per year for Dosso and 3.3% per year for Tahoua. Within these Regions however there are both populous and sparsely-settled areas and their rates of population growth are significantly different from each other. The Ex-Post Evaluation revealed that there were not enough students to fill in the classrooms in some of the schools[78], especially in rural areas. The construction plan appears to be inappropriate as it applied a uniform population growth rate in each entire Region and then calculated the number of students who would enroll into the schools from that rate, and then accordingly the number of classrooms to be constructed. A plan that took into consideration communities' locations and their demographic features (e.g. urban or rural, within or near a large community) would have been more effective.

An example of the problem in the B/D discussed above was seen in a school where a building with only one classroom was built, this school was located in an urban community into which people had continued to migrate, and it had experienced a large increase in the number of the students since the time of the B/D: 259 students at the time of the B/D compared to 411 students in 2009/10 school year. As a result, this school had to build 5 thatched classrooms in 2009/10 to accommodate ever-increasing students.

When it comes to the average number of children per permanent classroom[79], the number had however decreased from 132.8 (in 2001) to 50.3 (at the time of the Ex-Post Evaluation). Thanks to the project classrooms, as well as the government's and other donors' construction of classrooms, the number of permanent classrooms increased in the target areas which contributed to a decrease in the number of children per permanent classroom. In project schools, congestion in the permanent classrooms has been mitigated.

(2) Increases in the number of girl students and utilization of latrine buildings

The B/D expected that the construction of the latrine buildings (1 latrine building [3 pit latrines] per school) would promote hygiene education and improve sanitary conditions in the target schools. It was also envisaged that each of 3 pit latrines would be used individually by boys, girls, and teachers, which would develop an environment to promote the enrolment of more girl

[78] The level of utilization of the project classrooms was unable to be examined in Tahoua City (the Regional capital) and its neighboring Tahoua Department, due to the travel restrictions which prohibited the Ex-Post Evaluation team from visiting schools there. As discussed, the tendency was that the schools in urban areas, especially in big highly populated cities, had higher enrolment and thus the project classrooms tended to be fully utilized. This could also be the case with the project schools in Tahoua City and in Tahoua Department.

[79] A classroom which is made of concrete and the like i.e., not thatched one. The analysis includes not only the project classrooms but also those constructed by the government and other donors.

students. Within the 19 sample schools however there was not a single case of proactive hygiene education, including no initiatives to promote utilization of the latrines. Moreover, the field observation and interviews at the sample schools by the Ex-Post Evaluation team found out that not many students (neither boys nor girls) used the latrines frequently.

At a majority of the schools visited the pit latrines doors were always locked. When a student wanted to use the latrine they had to get permission from either a teacher or a student representative. This cumbersome procedure to use the latrine, coupled with the fact that most children were not accustomed to using latrines in everyday life, appeared to have lead to a continuous practice of open-air excretion by students (including many girls).

The fact that no schools visited had ever had the pit latrines pumped out, because they had not yet been filled, was a supporting evidence for the under usage of the latrines. According to the B/D's estimation, the pit latrines would become full in 3 years if the latrines were fully utilized.

The number of girls enrolled varied greatly from school to school and no definite tendency was found either in its increase or decrease. In a "before the project and after the project" comparison, out of the eleven schools from which reliable data was obtained, eight schools had seen an increase in girl students, while three schools had seen a decrease. Even in the eight schools that had seen an increase in girl students, the number of girls fluctuated over the years, with no consistent increase in the number of girls. It is thus concluded that the expectation in the B/D (the construction of latrines promotes the enrolment of girl students) has not been realized.

(3) Reduction of the economic burden on parents

The B/D predicted that after the completion of the project parents (and communities) would be freed from the economic burden of the construction of thatched classrooms[80] (approximately 35,000 FCFA per classroom per year). The Ex-Post Evaluation confirmed that the construction cost of a thatched classroom was on average between 35,000 – 50,000 FCFA[81], tending to be higher in urban areas (as there were additional material transportation costs). Since a typical target school was provided with two classrooms (one classroom building) by the project, the parents' and the community's economic burden was reduced on average by 70,000 – 100,000 FCFA. To support this finding, the majority of the interviewed parents/community members reported that the most tangible benefit of the project was the reduction (or elimination) of economic and/or physical requirements for thatched classroom construction.

[80] A thatched classroom would last one school year at the maximum and thus needs to be rebuilt every year.
[81] 5 FCFA was approximately 1 Japanese yen at the time of the field survey (March-April 2010).

(4) The soft component implementation status

The B/D expected that the implementation of the soft component named COSAGE (Composante soft visant à l'amélioration de la gestion des écoles) would activate parents' associations and COGES so that the parents (and the communities) would be more capable of maintaining school facilities and more motivated to do so. Main components of COSAGE were:

- Producing training manuals on participatory school management
- Implementing training targeted at school principals and teachers
- Promoting school management activities targeted at community members
- Holding elections of COGES members
- Supporting COGES in strengthening their organizational capacity and formulating school activity plans[82]

COSAGE was implemented in all the project schools (52 schools). However, approximately half of the interviewees in the sample schools did not remember anything about COSAGE. In Tahoua Region (also one of the target Regions of the "School for All" project [phase 1][83]) the interviewees – principals/teachers and parents – in four out of the seven schools visited by the Ex-Post Evaluation team did not remember COSAGE at all. While those interviewed in the remaining 3 schools could not differentiate between COSAGE and the "School for All" project activities (supporting COGES), they did remember vaguely that some training had been conducted through COSAGE or that COSAGE had told them to contribute the efforts towards school management. The "School for All" project had in the meantime adopted the concept of COSAGE, thus COSAGE functioned as its de facto pilot project. The Ex-Post Evaluation confirmed that in most cases COGES activities in the project schools became more active after the involvement of the "School for All" project (see "3.5.1 Structural Aspects of Operation and Maintenance").

Therefore, it is fair to hypothesize that COSAGE contributed to the smooth start-up of the "School for All" project, while it is difficult to conclude that COSAGE directly developed the maintenance capacity of the project schools, which had been its primary objective.

3.3.2 Qualitative Effects

The project aimed to reduce thatched classrooms in the target schools as they were vulnerable to bad weather and dust and therefore tended to have an adverse impact on students' health and ability to concentration on their studies. The constructed classrooms were expected to provide

[82] A school activity plan is an annual plan for a COGES to manage school-related activities and to maintain school facilities, equipment and materials.
[83] The "School for All" project is a JICA technical cooperation project to support COGES activities. Phase 1 of the "School for All" project started in January 2004, which was in the middle of the implementation of this grant aid project.

improved learning environments for the children. The Ex-Post Evaluation confirmed that the construction of permanent classrooms had eased the problems caused by thatched classrooms. Below are the positive effects that were reported by the interviewees (mainly teachers and parents).

- School terms tended to start late in thatched classrooms as their construction can be done only after the harvest season (September – October); the main materials used for thatched classrooms are straw, branches, and the remains of harvested crops. The construction of permanent classrooms has enabled classes/terms to start as scheduled.
- The very existence of classroom buildings has raised parents' awareness about school education. People tended not to be conscious of the beginning of the school year (October), especially in communities with schools that only had thatched classrooms. October is the end of the rainy season, during which plants including agricultural crops grow as tall as 2m virtually everywhere including the schoolyards. Thatched classrooms built in the previous school year become unseen in the overgrown plants and finally collapse. The permanent classroom buildings are in contrast visible throughout the year, which helps to remind the community members of sending children back to school when October comes.
- Construction of solid and high-quality classrooms has motivated parents to enroll and keep their children in school.
- Both teachers' and students' concentration in lessons has increased.

This project has somewhat achieved its objectives, therefore its effectiveness is fair.

3.4 Impact

3.4.1 Intended Effects

The average student to teacher ratio in 2001 (before the project) in the 19 sample schools was 45.7: 1 and at the time of the Ex-Post Evaluation the ratio had fallen to 34.2: 1. This reduction in ratio coupled with a more spacious and comfortable learning environment, in the project classrooms, has enabled teachers to take better care of the students as they are now able to assess more precisely what each individual student understands.

An additional unexpected impact was the reduction in the number of younger students dropping-out. The project classrooms were usually used for higher-grade classes, which reportedly made lower-grade children think that they too wanted to study in the "nice" classrooms, thus they were motivated to stay in school (however, data to support this phenomenon such as the number of drop-outs by grades was unavailable). Teachers and parents reported that the children who used the project classrooms became more willing to study and

concentrated more in classes. Some interviewees told the Ex-Post Evaluation team that the passing rates for the final examinations for the primary education certificate (Certificat de Fin d'Etudes du Premier Degré: CFEPD) had increased, although the data collected by the team did not show any clear evidence of improvement in the last 3-4 years.

The B/D expected that the project would reduce the construction cost needs of thatched classrooms by a total of 4,935,000 FCFA every year, which had been previously borne by the parents. The Ex-Post Evaluation found that the construction cost of a thatched classroom was between 35,000–50,000 FCFA per year, therefore as a result of the 185 classrooms constructed/renovated by the project, parents related to the target schools have been freed from paying a collective total of between 6,475,000 – 9,250,000 FCFA every year. Parents interviewed from the 19 sample schools revealed that the project had greatly eased their economic burden of construction of thatched classrooms, although no case was identified in which parents invested the money saved in other types of educational activities. The Ex-Post Evaluation could not identify a case in which parents had become more proactively involved in school management due to the project.

3.4.2 Other Impacts

Neither relocation of residents nor land acquisition was needed for the project. There was no perceivable environmental impact caused by the construction of the schools.

As discussed above indirect effects, to some extent, occurred through and after the implementation of the project and the project has brought about positive impacts.

3.5 Sustainability (Rating: b)

3.5.1 Structural Aspects of Operation and Maintenance

As a part of the decentralization policy in the education sector in Niger, the Basic Education Law of 1998 designated local governments and community people (in the form of COGES) to handle primary schools' management and maintenance. The B/D reported that the local government's maintenance system of education facilities were hardly functioning and that COGES which were responsible for small scale facility maintenance were not necessarily active.

The Ex-Post Evaluation found that among the 19 sample schools there were only 2 schools for which local governments had conducted maintenance activities (i.e., repair of students' desk-and-chairs and ceiling repairs of a government-constructed classroom). Involvement of COGES varied significantly from school to school. Three COGES out of the 19 were actually

dysfunctional[84] due to problems in human relations[85]. The remaining 16 COGES took care of small-scale maintenance of school facilities (especially the construction of thatched classrooms), in most cases without any help from local governments. It would be fair to surmise that the management and maintenance of the education facilities by the local governments is yet become functional, and thus problems that are beyond the capacity of COGES are left unsolved.

While a JICA technical cooperation project, the "School for All" project, has supported the establishing and operation of COGES in schools, it also encouraged COGES to include school facility maintenance in school activity plans. These activity plans, which have been built on the consensus of teachers and parents, have made the necessity of maintenance visible. In the school activity plans of the 16 functioning COGES, the average number of school activities was 6.4 in Tahoua and 3.8 in Dosso. This difference may be attributable to the fact that Tahoua Region was a target Region in both Phase 1 and 2 of the "School for All" project, while Dosso was only a target Region in Phase 2.

3.5.2 Technical Aspects of Operation and Maintenance

The facilities constructed or renovated by the project were designed to be relatively easily maintained from both technical and financial perspectives.

According to the B/D it is beneficial to repaint blackboards every year which can be done by teachers and/or parents without requiring any special techniques. The Ex-Post Evaluation found that some schools recognized the need for regular repainting, while others did not even have any comprehension of necessity to repaint. Reliable data on blackboards could be obtained from 10 schools; 6 had repainted the blackboards at least once since the completion of the project. In the schools that had not repainted the blackboards, cracks were observed on the surface due to oil wearing out.

The B/D stated that the repainting of the inner walls of the classrooms would be needed once in every 10 years and the repainting of fitments[86] once in every 5 years, and that the work needed to be done by professional painters due to its technical requirements. However, no sample schools recognized the need for repainting nor had ever done so, it was also reported that professional painters in the project areas were scarce (with the technical level being low).

The B/D considered pumping out of pit latrines would be needed once in every 3 years, which technically had to be done by professional workers. All the sample schools, however, reported that pit latrines had never been pumped out as they were not yet full. The fact that no pit latrines

[84] The three schools include two in Tahoua Region (out of the seven interviewed) and one in Dosso Regions (out of the 12 interviewed). Tahoua was one of the target Regions in the "School for All" project phase 1, while Dosso was included only in phase 2 which started in August 2007 and was in operation at the time of the Ex-Post Evaluation.
[85] Including conflicts between the teacher(s) and villagers, and among villagers.
[86] Such as built-in filing cabinets in each classroom.

had become full even after 5 years (since the completion of the project) appears to indicate under-usage of the latrines (see "3.3.1 (2) Increases in the number of girl students and the utilization of latrine buildings"). Pumping out of a pit latrine would cost approximately 25,000 FCFA.

3.5.3 Financial Aspects of Operation and Maintenance

Neither the Ministry of National Education nor the local governments had sufficient budget to maintain schools' facilities. Most of the costs for the maintenance have been borne directly by the parents of the students of their respective schools. The B/D planned to conduct the soft component (COSAGE) to build up the capacity of the COGES of the project schools so that they could properly estimate and secure the maintenance funds for the facilities constructed by this project. As discussed in "3.3.1 (4) The soft component implementation status", the "School for All" project, which adopted the concept of COSAGE, supported the capacity building of COGES in the project area. As a result, COGES in the project schools today formulate their activity plans (see "3.5.1 Structural Aspects of Operation and Maintenance"), in which the estimates of the expenses required for the annual school management and maintenance are done.

Among the 19 sample schools that the Ex-Post Evaluation team visited, only two schools received financial support for repair from local government authorities, while most COGES depended solely on parents for their maintenance funds. Although the amount collected varied between each COGES, the average contribution paid by parents was 500–1,000 FCFA per student at schools that collected contributions regularly. As the size of the schools (the number of students) ranged considerably[87], the maximum total amount that could be collected varied widely.

Collection rates for maintenance funds also varied; from the sample 19 schools, three schools[88] were hardly able to collect any contribution from the parents, while in the other schools the collection rates were between 60% and 70%. As the collected amounts were smaller than the planned, most COGES were short of maintenance funds. In order to compensate for the negative balances some COGES received in-kind contribution[89] from parents, including labor. Another means reported for making up the shortfall was to use the money and/or materials (especially materials for the thatched classrooms such as thatch and wood) that were left over from the previous year.

Some COGES used part of the money collected to purchase school consumables such as chalk, and in some cases construction of school-related small-scale facilities (such as school fences or

[87] The biggest and smallest schools in terms of student numbers out of the 19 sample schools were 707 students and 48 students respectively, in the school year 2009/10.
[88] These three schools were those in which COGES were dysfunctional (see "4.3.5.1 Structural Aspects of Operation and Maintenance").
[89] The materials for thatched classroom construction, such as straw and branches

a night-watchman's residence). However, in most cases the biggest expense was the construction of thatched classrooms to make up for the shortage of permanent classrooms.

Out of the expenses envisaged in the school activity plans, approximately 60% was applied to the maintenance and repair of facilities and equipment (especially students' desk-and-chairs).

As discussed in "3.5.2 Technical Aspects of Operation and Maintenance", none of the sample schools saved any fund for repainting the classroom walls and fitments, or for pumping out of pit latrines, as their needs were not acknowledged. When blackboards were repainted at some of the schools, teachers and/or COGES members usually performed the task by themselves in order to minimize the cost, and the paint was either supplied by the IEBs or purchased by COGES.

3.5.4 Current Status of Operation and Maintenance

(1) Management of COGES

Almost all of the maintenance work for the facilities and equipment provided by the project had to be assumed by the COGES of respective schools, as discussed above.

The soft component of the project (COSAGE) promoted the election of COGES members. In the "School for All" project that effectively was the successor of COSAGE, the democratic election of COGES members was one of the requirements. At the time of the Ex-Post Evaluation COGES had been activated in many schools through various inputs including the election process. COGES formulated the school activity plans annually and implemented small-scale repairs and maintenance of the school facilities and equipment.

In the schools that the Ex-Post Evaluation team visited, COGES members were essentially chosen through the election process[90]. Yet, in some cases one or more members had stayed in the COGES committee for many years. This had not posed any major problem but could lead to inappropriate management of COGES in the future; if one particular person continuously stays in an influential position in COGES it could make the school activity plans and their implementation rigid and inefficient.

(2) Maintenance of classroom and latrine buildings

Most of the sample schools checked all the furniture and equipment, following the governmental regulations, and gave a report of their condition to their respective IEBs at the beginning and end of every school year.

[90] In one school where COGES was dysfunctional, the COGES committee was in name only and there was no plan for a next election.

No major damage of the buildings had been reported so far. However, the furniture (students' desk-and-chairs) had severe breakage (see "3.2.1 Project Outputs"). The Ex-Post Evaluation team also observed breakage in doors and windows at several schools.

The functioning COGES have carried out small-scale repairs of facilities/equipment. Out of the 19 sample schools, seven have repaired students' desk-and-chairs, five have fixed doors and/or windows of the classrooms, and three had fixed doors of the latrine buildings.

The Ex-Post Evaluation also confirmed that 13 schools had constructed thatched classrooms in order to resolve the shortage of permanent classrooms and one school had constructed an office for its principal, albeit a thatched one.

The latrines were kept clean and hygienic, although it may be attributable to the under-utilization of the latrines (see "3.3.1 (2) Increases in the number of girl students and the utilization of latrine buildings").

(3) Other issues relating to school management

Issues pointed out at the time of the B/D concerning school management included the: low capacity of teachers, shortage of teachers, and shortage of school materials such as textbooks.

Classes in three schools (out of the 19 sample schools) have been impaired by the shortage/inappropriate assignment of teachers. Two of them reported that they could only admit first graders once in every two years due to a shortage of teachers, and one of these two schools had been forced to operate a multiple class system. The third school was not conducting some classes at the time of the Ex-Post Evaluation, as a teacher was transferred out of the school during the school year. Teachers tend to be transferred within one to three years (more frequently in the rural areas).

How to secure teachers with adequate capacity has therefore continued to be a big problem since the time of the B/D. The Ex-Post Evaluation confirmed that several COGES, though yet small in number, had requested the IEBs that supervise the schools to assign additional teachers or to relocate problematic teachers. The concerned IEBs reportedly responded to these requests.

The distribution of textbooks by the Ministry of National Education was quite often delayed, according to the interviews. The sample schools were unable to provide one textbook to each child and in most of the sample schools student to textbook ratio was 2:1 to 4:1, which was approximately the same as that of the time of B/D.

Inappropriate storage of basic information on school activities and management was another prevalent problem revealed by the Ex-Post Evaluation. In most of the sample schools, fundamental data on the last few years of school management were not kept properly such as:

the number of students; the number of drop-outs; the number of students who took and passed CFEPD; and school activity plans. The lack of all of this impeded the Ex-Post Evaluation in its ability to assess the changes in the situations. Some of the IEBs in charge of these schools were also unable to provide data, as they did not systematically store records.

Some problems have been observed in terms of the organizational, financial, and technical aspects of the project; therefore the sustainability of the project is fair.

4 Conclusion, Recommendations and Lessons Learned

4.1 Conclusion

The relevance of the project has been evaluated as high since it is consistent with the Nigerien government's development policies, the Japan's ODA policy, and the local development needs. The efficiency of the project has been evaluated as fair as while the project cost was within the planned amount and the actual project period was only slightly longer than planned, the durability of the furniture (students' desk-and-chairs) was not satisfactory. The effectiveness of the project has been evaluated as fair, as although the project contributed to improving learning environments for the students, congestion in the permanent classrooms was eased, and the economic burden on parents from having to constructed the thatched classrooms was reduced, the number of the students learning in the project classrooms was estimated to be slightly lower than 80% of the projected figures and the latrines were not fully utilized. The sustainability of the project has been evaluated as fair, as the durability and the quality of the facilities constructed/renovated by the project were of a superior standard and the COGES that were responsible for the maintenance of the facilities had become more active than before the project (this is mainly attributable to the achievement of "School for All" project), although their (COGES) managerial and financial capacity was still insufficient in collecting and utilizing contributions for the maintenance of the facilities and equipment.

In light of the above, the overall rating of the project is fairly satisfactory (C).

4.2 Recommendations

4.2.1 Recommendations to the Executing Agency

(1) Appropriate assignment of teachers

The Ex-Post Evaluation confirmed that some of the classrooms were not utilized to a satisfactory extent due to a shortage of teachers. In urban areas, the number of teachers in a school was more or less sufficient (i.e., at least a minimum number of teachers were allocated), while the schools in rural areas suffer from a severe shortage of teachers. The Ministry of National Education, though realizing the importance of assigning an appropriate number of

teachers, has had difficulties in transferring teachers from urban to rural areas as teachers often resist transfer to rural schools. The Ex-Post Evaluation found a few cases in which COGES had requested the IEBs concerned to allocate additional teachers, which was later realized. It would be recommendable for the Ministry of National Education to make continuous efforts to respond to the requests from the schools, so that as much need for teachers as possible will be met.

In Niger, 82% of the primary school teachers are employed on contract basis while only 12% are permanent teachers[91] and many of the contracted teachers do not officially qualify as teachers[92]. Some parents and principals pointed out to the Ex-Post Evaluation team the poor teaching capacity of some of the contractual (unqualified) teachers in their schools. The Ministry of National Education has been conducting special training courses to enable contractual teachers to obtain teachers' qualification, a scheme appreciated by the principals and parents interviewed. It is recommended to the Ministry that the Ministry continuously makes efforts to increase the number of qualified teachers by conducting more training courses.

(2) Mandatory compilation and storage of data on the operation of schools

Basic information on schools including the student enrolments and the number of students who had successfully passed CFEPD was not available at some of the schools and IEBs. Several cases were reported in which former principals had carried away the school data when they were transferred. It would be advisable to impose mandatory compilation and storage of school-related data, so that the data would be kept in the school regardless of the transfer of principals and/or teachers. COGES members, with support and instruction from the IEB officers, could assume the role of data keepers. Recognizing the importance of the issue, the Ministry of National Education expressed its readiness to establish proper data handover procedures for principals.

(3) Appropriate use of facilities and equipment

It would be recommendable that the Ministry of National Education organize a campaign aimed at better handling of the equipment provided (especially desk-and-chairs). The target audience would be the students of the project schools, and at the school level the campaign would be conducted by the COGES members and teachers. The IEB officers, who monitor and supervise the schools regularly, could utilize their opportunities to visit the schools to support and instruct the COGES members and teachers on how to carry out the campaign. Students who have learned how to handle equipment with more care would be less likely to break furniture, which

[91] The percentages do not add up to 100%, as there are some other types of teachers including "communal masters" (Maître Communautaire). Statistics on Basic Education 2008/09.
[92] All permanent teachers must be graduates of technical courses for teachers and hold a teachers' qualification, while a majority of contracted teachers are not course graduates (and thus unqualified).

in turn would lead to a reduction of furniture repair costs, which currently represents a considerable amount out of the overall expenses in school activity plans.

The latrines constructed by the project were not utilized much, as the children frequently excreted outside. The Ministry of National Education could also launch a campaign for appropriate utilization of the latrines, aimed at improving health and sanitation. The IEB officers who supervise the project schools could assume the role of instructors/monitors in this.

4.2.2 Recommendations to JICA

As a result of the Ex-Post Evaluation, it was confirmed that there were dysfunctional COGES within the project sites. Human factors such as conflicts between COGES members and other villagers appear to be the reasons for the problem. These problematic COGES need regular monitoring and guidance from outside, and under the current system the IEB officers, who supervise the schools (teachers) in their routine work, would be the people in the best position to provide guidance to COGES. It would be beneficial for JICA to encourage through the "School for All" project the IEBs in the target areas to thoroughly assess the actual conditions of COGES as a first step towards the proposed monitoring and guidance to be given to problematic COGES.

It would also be recommendable that JICA support COGES, through the "School for All" project, in collecting contribution from the broader community. COGES at present raise funds for school management and maintenance from the parents of the students. However, due to insufficient contribution some of the project schools are unable to implement planned activities. Others try to cover the lack of funds by parents' in-kind contribution (e.g. labor contribution). It would be advisable for COGES to request not only parents but also the community to provide materials, labor, and even financial support.

4.3 Lessons Learned

(1) Construction plans taking into consideration the demographic features of the target schools' locations

The Ex-Post Evaluation revealed that while many thatched classrooms had been constructed in urban areas due to a shortage of permanent classrooms, permanent classrooms constructed in rural areas tended to be under-utilized due to the smaller number of students. This is attributable to the B/D which had estimated the number of classrooms to be constructed by applying a uniform population growth rate across each of the entire target Regions. In future school construction projects, it would be beneficial to design a plan with due consideration of respective target communities' demographic changes, so that the plan would be prepared in conformity with local circumstances.

(2) How to foresee grant aid projects' effects

One of the project's effects expected at the time of the B/D was that construction of latrines for girls would promote enrolment of girl students. It did not materialize: the constructed latrines were not fully utilized (see "3.3.1 (2) Increases in the number of girl students and the utilization of latrine buildings"). The B/D's hypothesis that the constructed latrines would be unconditionally used and that it would promote enrolment of girls did not properly consider the circumstances in Niger.

It would not be correct to assume that infrastructure development (in this case, construction of latrines) would directly promote an outcome such as an increase in the number of girl students. It would be advisable that similar projects be more prudent when assuming improved girls' enrolment in the expected effects of the project. Support for the promotion of girls' education would require a technical cooperation project and could not be to be dealt with in a grant aid infrastructure construction project (including in its soft component).

Construction of latrines is considered to be important for the improvement of health and sanitation of the target population. However, in order for its effects to materialize some measures that promote utilization of the latrines (e.g. introduction of a soft component instructing how to use the latrines; see "(3) Contents of soft components in grant aid projects" below) should accompany their construction.

(3) Contents of soft components in grant aid projects

COSAGE, the soft component of this project, was rather ambitious as it tried to involve both teachers and parents in school management by instructing them, among other trainings, how to conduct democratic election of COGES members. The impact of the soft component on individual project schools was not perceived with its experiences and concepts not remembered or utilized well, although it contributed as a de facto pilot project to the smooth implementation of the "School for All" project (JICA's technical cooperation project).

This finding indicates that a simpler soft component, such as ones instructing how to handle the furniture (desk-and-chairs) with care or how to properly use the latrines, would have been more effective and have brought about changes in the behavior of the beneficiaries, thus laying the foundations for the proper maintenance and use of the provided facilities and equipment.

(4) Choosing appropriate designs and materials for building furniture

Many of the project schools suffered from the problem of bats, which had nested in the ceilings and disturbed the students. In similar future projects, it would be beneficial to adopt building designs that would eliminate an invasion of small animals.

In this project, there was room for improvement with the material selected for the furniture. The plywood used for the students' desk-and-chairs were prone to breaking. It would be sensible for the subsequent projects not to use similar non-durable materials.

Another problem with the furniture was that the screw heads were exposed on the top surfaces in the boards of both the desk and chair parts, which were then subject to vandalism by students. It is important to work out a design to avoid children's misbehavior damaging furniture, such as putting the screws on the sides of the furniture so that they are not exposed to children's sight.

(5) Effective utilization of the facilities

The Ex-Post Evaluation found two cases that the provided classrooms were used in the evening for adult literacy classes that targeted community members. The solid and high-quality classroom buildings, constructed in these communities, appeared to have encouraged the community people to request its use. This was then seemingly discussed among the community and COGES members and an approval was given by COGES from the perspective of effective use of the facilities. This is a good example of effective utilization of the provided facilities based on the local needs, which should be shared among the concerned personnel for future reference.