

Mr. Robert Prouty,
EFA-FTI Secretariat,
The World Bank,
Washington DC, 20433

Lazimpat (Neel Saraswati Marg)
P.O.Box 6332, Kathmandu
Tel: +977 (1) 441 30 10
Fax: +977 (1) 441 14 09
E-mail: ktmamb@um.dk
<http://www.ambkathmandu.um.dk>



Enclosure
1

File
104.Nepal.813.KTM

Department

18 August 2009

Dear Mr. Robert Prouty,

Appraisal and Endorsement of the Primary Education Component of an Education Sector Plan

Country: NEPAL

Overall comments: The Education Sector Plan (ESP) for Nepal for the next five years is presented through the School Sector Reform Plan, Volumes I and II (SSRP). The documents provide a coherent picture of the Government of Nepal's (GON) plans to reform and strengthen the school education sector, with a specific emphasis on Basic Education (covering Grades 1-8). The Plan builds on the successes of past programs in Nepal and continues to strengthen the core education sector policies which include but are not limited to: (i) universalizing enrolment in basic schooling by aggressively targeting the most marginalized and disadvantaged groups in schooling, (ii) decentralizing responsibilities for school management to the school level; (iii) strengthening teacher qualifications through teacher licensing, training, and qualifications upgrading, (iv) channeling greater share of resources through norms based approaches for equitable resourcing, (v) the adoption of multilingual approaches to ensure that all children have equal access to schooling in the country; and (v) opening up textbook printing and distribution to the private sector in an effort to make the system more efficient. The main challenges that remain include access and inclusion at all higher levels of schooling, covering Grades 6-8 and 9-12. Improving systemic efficiencies and the quality of education across all levels of schooling will be the central objective of the SSRP.

Strengths: The main strengths of the program include inter alia: (i) building on lessons learned from past programs; (ii) strong policy basis (as described above) on which the current Education For All Program (EFA) has been implemented and a need to both consolidate this policy base and further strengthen it through SSRP which is supported through the development of a comprehensive Policy Matrix agreed to by the GON and all Development Partners (DPs); (iii) a commitment to make Good Governance a central feature of the implementation of the SSRP, for which the GON and the DPs have agreed on a "Governance and Accountability Action Plan" (GAAP); (iv) a strong Education Management Information System (EMIS) that carries out two censuses a year through the Flash I and Flash II questionnaires and provides direct information

on start-of-year and end-of-year enrolments, (v) sector wide approach (SWAp) that provides a strong basis for key systemic reforms; (vi) making financing more norms-based, and thereby limiting discretion and improving equity through a needs-based approach; and (vii) strong ownership on the part of GON and a strong relationship between the GON and DPs which allows for alignment with the Government's program and harmonization across DPs in accordance with the Paris Declaration and the Accra Agenda for Action.

Concerns: There are concerns regarding both program level and country level risks. The SSRP includes a considerable number of reforms and covers a wide array of interventions, and though the GON and DPs have worked to improve prioritization and sequencing during the preparation process, there is a need to ensure this during implementation.

Country level risks have increased in Nepal over the last few years, and these may affect the education sector through: (i) inability to ensure policy continuity, (ii) worsening law and order affecting the function of schools and other institutions, (iii) the ability to translate policies into actions given fragmentation in Government, (iv) political and other forms of interference in the school system and in the running of schools which could result in elite capture, a return to a system where patronage is valued more than qualifications especially in teacher recruitment, (v) worsening fiduciary environment – both in terms of Financial Management and Procurement, and (vi) the possibility of return to conflict.

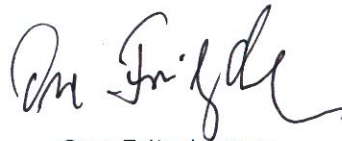
However, there is also considerable evidence that even during the worst years of conflict in Nepal, the education sector managed to achieve considerable outcomes and it is on the basis of this conviction that the DPs continue to endorse and support the education sector in Nepal.

Conclusion: The DPs have technically and financially appraised the School Sector Reform Program. The DPs have concluded that this is a strong program in itself, and is made stronger given that the program builds on the successes of past programs and have been assured of policy continuity on the key policy reforms identified under "Overall Comments"; and most importantly, the program has strong Government ownership and resourcing with education continuing to receive the largest share of the Government's budget. The GON and the DPs have also identified a funding gap amounting to approximately US\$ 293 million (or 11.2% of the program envelope). If the Education For All Fast Track Initiative (EFA-FTI) Secretariat accepts our recommendation for endorsing Nepal's ESP, the DPs, on behalf of the GON, will request financing support from the Catalytic Fund (CF). The DPs have identified the World Bank as the supervising entity to manage support from the CF.

The Development Partners in Nepal therefore support the School Sector Reform Program as Nepal's Education Sector Plan and recommend this for FTI endorsement as illustrated by their signatures affixed below.

Enclosed please find a list with signature by partners who recommend the sector plan for FTI endorsement

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ove Fritz Larsen". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Ove" being the most prominent.

Ove Fritz Larsen
Minister Counsellor/Donor Focal Point Chair

Signature by partners who recommend the sector plan for FTI endorsement

Name of Agency	Name of Individual	Signature
Asian Development Bank (ADB)	Barry J. Hitchcock Country Director	
Association of International Non-Government Organizations (AIN)	Chij Kumar Shrestha Chairperson	
Australian Agency for International Development, AUSAID	Mark Bailey Regional Counsellor for Development Cooperation	
Department for International Development of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (DFID)	Digby Swift Education Adviser	
The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, The Kingdom of Denmark	Ove Larsen Minister Counsellor	
The Commission of the European Communities	José María Troncoso Perera Attaché	
The Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland	Petri Hautananiemi Counsellor	
International Development Association, The World Bank	Rajendra Dhoj Joshi Senior Education Specialist	
Japan International Cooperation Agency	Kristine H. Storholt Second Secretary	

The United Nations Educational,
Scientific and Cultural
Organization (UNESCO)

Tap Raj Pant
Head of the Education
Unit



A handwritten signature in red ink, appearing to read 'T. R. Pant', written over a horizontal line.

The United Nations Children's
Fund (UNICEF)

Lieke van de Wiel
Chief of Education



A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'L. van de Wiel', written over a horizontal line.

United States Agency for
International Development

William Patterson
Director, ^{SDO}



A handwritten signature in red ink, appearing to read 'William Patterson', written over a horizontal line.

The UNITED Nations World Food Programme
(WFP)

Dominique Hyde
Deputy Country Director



A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'D. Hyde', written over a horizontal line.