

**EDUCATION SECTOR GROUP'S  
APPRAISAL REPORT:**

**EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2012-2020  
ACTION PLAN FOR EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT 2012-2014**

**THE KYRGYZ REPUBLIC**

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Hugh McLean  
London, January 2013

## List of Acronyms

ADB	Asian Development Bank
AKF	Aga Khan Foundation
APED	Action Plan for Education Development
AVTE	Agency for Technical and Vocational Education
CbKs	Community-based Kindergartens
CEATM	Centre for Educational Assessment, Testing and Methodology
DAC	Development Assistance Committee (OECD)
DfID	Department for International Development
ECD	Early Childhood Development
EDS	Education Development Strategy
EFA	Education for All
EMIS	Education Management Information System
EU	European Union
EUEAS	European Union External Action Service
FTI	Fast Track Initiative
GIZ	<i>Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit</i>
GMR	Global Monitoring Report
GoK	Government of Kyrgyzstan
GPE	Global Partnership for Education
HEI	Higher Education Institution
ICT	Internet Communication Technology
ID	Identification
IIEP	International Institute for Education Policy
IMF	International Monetary Fund
KAE	Kyrgyz Academy of Education
LSG	Local Self Government
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey
MoES	Ministry of Education and Science
MoF	Minister of Finance
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NPRS	National Poverty Reduction Strategy
NSC	National Statistics Committee
OECD	Organisation for Cooperation and Development
OOSCI	Out-of-school Children Initiative
PCF	Per Capita Financing
PFM	Public Finance Management
PISA	Programme for International Student Assessment
PIU	Project Implementation Unit
PSEO	Pre-school Education Organisation
READ	Russian Education Aid For Development
RF	Russian Federation
SFK	Soros Fund Kyrgyzstan
SP	Social Partner
SWAp	Sector-wide Approach
TUESW	Trade Union of Education and Science Workers
UNESCO	United Nations Education and Science Organisation
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VEI	Vocational Education
WB	The World Bank

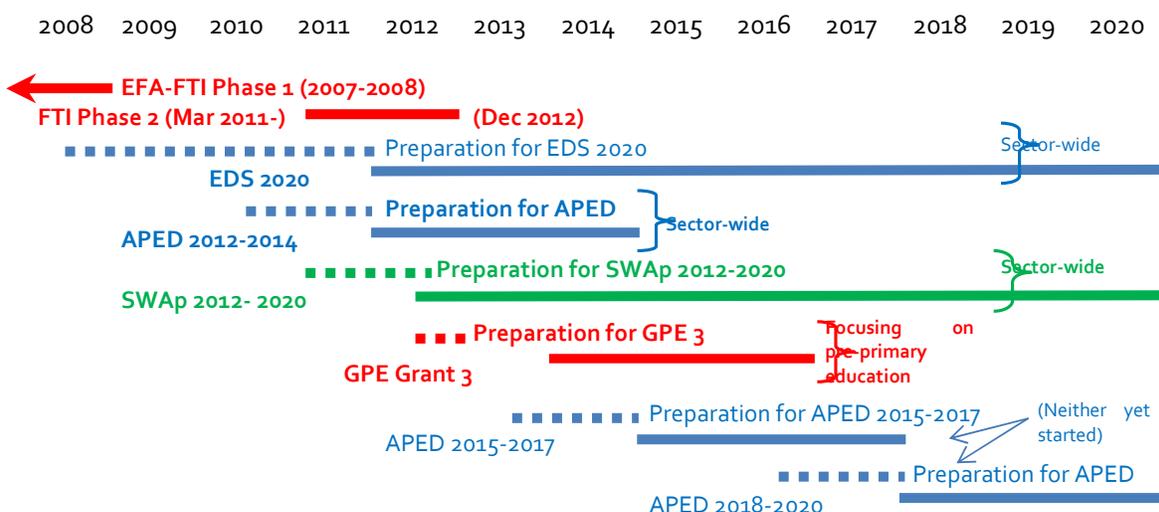
## Part One

### 1.1 Introduction

This report provides an appraisal of the Education Development Strategy for 2012-2020 [EDS 2020] of Kyrgyzstan and its first implementation plan, the Action Plan for Education Development 2012-2014 [APED 2012-24], and of the preparation and collaboration around these processes. It is undertaken on behalf of, and in close consultation with, members of the Education Sector Group in Kyrgyzstan as a requirement of the proposal package for the third grant to Kyrgyzstan from the Global Partnership for Education [GPE]<sup>i</sup>.

The focus of this appraisal report is the pre-primary and primary education components of the EDS 2020 and the APED 2012-14. The report must be placed, like a jigsaw piece, into the big-picture of other initiatives dedicated to education reform in Kyrgyzstan; the key ones of which are shown in *Graph 1* below. It is also important to understand how the five objectives of the new GPE strategy are pertinent to Kyrgyzstan<sup>ii</sup>. The EDS 2020 and the APED 2012-24 cover the education sector as a whole: from pre-primary to higher professional education as well as adult and informal education, a span wider than the remit of the GPE. Donor partners in Kyrgyzstan are involved across this range relatively extensively, although not comprehensively. They are coordinating ever more closely through the Sector Wide Approach process [SWAp] led by the European Union External Action Service [EUEAS] Bishkek. The recently updated GPE guidelines (GPE, 2006) that this appraisal follows focus on the primary education component of an education sector plan; an alternative set of GPE guidelines (IIEP, 2012) on the appraisal of an entire education sector plan have also been very helpful. The upcoming GPE-3 proposal will focus entirely on pre-primary education. Given this puzzle of initiatives, donor interests and guidelines, the report takes cognizance of developments over the entire education sector but concentrates on the pre-primary and primary education components of the EDS 2020 and the APED 2012-14. It focuses substantively on these components but also considers the capacity and arrangements for planning, management and monitoring.

*Figure 1: Time-line of major current education reform initiatives in Kyrgyzstan*



As the guidelines (GPE, 2006) propose, the purpose of this appraisal report is twofold:

- i) to provide an external validation that the education policy environment, national capacity development and donor-partner collaboration within the country are conducive to investment in the sector by GPE; and
- ii) to assist the country donor partners both in further coordinating their support and in providing their formal endorsement of the EDS 2020 and the APED 2012-14.

The guidelines for the sector plan (IIEP, 2012) emphasise the importance both of country ownership within the Framework of the Paris Declaration (DAC, 2005) and the Accra Agenda for Action (DAC, 2008), as well as the development of capacity within the country. In order to validate their credibility, this appraisal considers the preparation and processes to establish the EDS 2020 and the APED 2012-14 as much as it does the substantive aspects these documents.

The two key documents appraised thus are the EDS 2020 and the APED 2012-14. A wider range of sources and references are used; these are cited in the text and listed as sources and references in the standard manner. Key documents that contributed to development of the EDS 2020 and APED 2012-14, or that are part of the national process around these documents, are listed in *Table 1*.

The documents in the table reflect the GPE's five new strategic priorities (GPE, 2012) in various ways. Given the political turmoil in 2010 and the ways in which the EDS 2020 and the APED 2012-14 respond to the fundamental causes, these strategies attempt to redress the causes and consequences of conflict on education. A gender-sensitivity audit of the EDS 2020 was undertaken, which forms part of the appraisal. Equity issues connected with disability are also urgent in Kyrgyzstan, these are addressed primarily in the OECD review. Early grade reading does not adequately capture the education quality challenges in Kyrgyzstan: education quality is more broadly addressed in the EDS 2020, the APED 2012-14 and Lessons from PISA; early grade reading is, of course, addressed in the USAID review. Teacher effectiveness is a key concern area in the EDS 2020 and several tasks are devoted to it in the ADEP 2012-14. The ADEP provides detailed information on where increased funding support for education is realised. The Joint Statement on SWAp deals broadly with budget support, the public expenditure tracking survey and political economy analysis. The UNICEF study on donor involvement deal with the architecture of education finance and funding.

*Table 1: Main Documents for the Technical Appraisal*

Document	Date of draft/ Base year data	Authorship/ Sponsorship	Document Length
Concept of Education Development of the Kyrgyz Republic 2012-2020	2011	Government of Kyrgyz Rep.	17 pages
Education Development Strategy of Kyrgyzstan 2012-2020 (Updated)	December 2012	Ministry of Ed. and Science.	39 pages
Action Plan for Education Development 2012-2014 (Updated)	October 2012	UNICEF/ MoES	39 pages
Kyrgyz Republic EDP 2012-2014 Cost and Finance Simulation Model	June 2012	Socium Consult	9 work sheets
Kyrgyz Republic EDP 2012-2014 Costing Final Report	June 2012	Socium Consult	47 pages
<b>List of Relevant Education Sector Analyses:</b>			
a) Kyrgyz Republic 2010: Lesson from PISA	March 2011	OECD & WB	370 pages
b) Comparative Analysis of Databases in the	July 2012	UNICEF	30 pages

Educational Sector in Kyrgyzstan				
c)	Public Policy Eligibility Assessment: For Action Fiche for Sector Policy Support Programme – Kyrgyzstan, 2010	June 2012	The Money Machine II (for EUEAS)	24 pages
d)	Review of Early Grade Reading Teaching and Skills	Jan 2012	USAID	72 pages
e)	All Children in School by 2015: Kyrgyzstan Country Study	Nov 2012	UNICEF	115 pages
f)	Interim Strategy Note for Kyrgyzstan	June 2011	WB Group	60 pages
g)	Political Economy Analysis of the Education Sector in Kyrgyzstan	Nov 2011	EUEAS	30 pages
h)	Public Expenditure Tracking Survey on Health and Education in Kyrgyzstan 2012	July 2012	DfID	35 pages
i)	Review of National Policies for Education: Students with Special Needs and those with Disabilities (Kyrgyz Republic)	2009	OECD	Pages 121-178 of 247
j)	Joint Statement between the Kyrgyz Government and Development Partners for the Education Sector SWAP 2012-2014	2013	Government & Development Partners	13 pages
k)	Donor Involvement Analysis in Education Sector Development in Kyrgyzstan: Analyses and Recommendations	2008	UNICEF	29 pages
l)	Introducing a Gender Perspective on the Education Development Strategy 2012- 2020. [A gender edit of the EDS 2020]	2009	Agency for Social Technologies	60 pages

The report follows the recommended format. A summary statement of the donor's appraisal and the signatures of the donors who are endorsing the EDS 2020 and the APED 2012-14 are provided as a separate document. This is followed by the preliminary pages, which include acknowledgements, a list of acronyms and the table of contents. The appraisal report itself is in three parts. **Part One** includes this introduction; it is followed by a background section on the wider context for education reform in Kyrgyzstan, which involves a consideration of aid effectiveness, and a discussion of the base-line data and indicators for EFA. **Part Two** provides a technical appraisal of the EDS 2020 and, secondly, an appraisal of APED 2012-14 and the indications, rather than indicators, of what has been achieved by the end of its first year. **Part Three** gives the overall conclusions and the recommendations for donor actions.

## 1.2 Background on education reform and donor involvement in Kyrgyzstan

There have been a number of studies and investigations carried out by donors, Kyrgyz academics and other stakeholders on the education sector in the country in recent years. This background section therefore highlights key points from relevant current reports rather than report on new research and analysis; it gives a brief overview of the available baseline indicators on education. Its main focus is the contextual factors that are immediately relevant to the EDS 2020 and the APED 2012-14. However, since the tumultuous events of spring 2010 carved the social, political and economic issues faced by the country into high relief; no sensible discussion on education is possible without some cognizance of this wider context.

After independence in 1991 and the relative opening-up of the country and liberalisation of the economy that followed, Kyrgyzstan experienced almost a decade of continued decline

and uncertainty throughout the 1990s. From the turn of the century, there has been an uncertain recovery, i.e. highly variable from year to year as well as geographically imbalanced. Still, annual growth in GDP has averaged about 4 per cent from 2000, despite its annual variability, and rates of social poverty trended downwards as a result of two poverty reduction plans. The ousting of Akayev in the Tulip Revolution, in 2005, and the deficient elections that followed in 2007 and 2009, merely shuffled the political cards at the top of the deck and did not result in a deepening of democracy or accountable governance. There was an immediate negative effect on growth in 2005 but no reversal of the overall trends in key social indicators. The political upheavals of April 2010, which in turn ousted Akayev's successor, Bakiyev, and the inter-ethnic violence of June 2010 that ensued, reflect unresolved political conflicts and accumulating social stresses of uneven economic growth. The social crises that resulted from the 2010 turmoil caused at least 400 deaths, resulted in 75,000 refugees and displaced over 300,000 people internally (ADB *et al*, 2010). The combined effects of the global financial crises of 2008 and the rise in international food prices with these internal events still linger, threatening to reverse some of the poverty reduction gains that were made in years before. The IMF (2012) reports that the percentage of the population living below the poverty line, which had decreased from 61 per cent in 2006 to 32 per cent in 2008, increased to 36.8 per cent in 2011.

There is a greater sense of stability in the country and better prospects for growth after the clear victory of Atambaev in the 2011 Presidential elections. This section will show that social policy reform has maintained momentum after a difficult decade and that it continues in a basically progressive direction. Clearly, Kyrgyzstan remains vulnerable to both internal and external shocks and wider political and economic factors will significantly affect the potential for meaningful social sector reform.

*Table 2: Movements in key Indicators: GDP growth, per cent of GDP on education, per cent of national budget on education, per cent of education budget on pre-school*

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
1	5.7	5.0	-0.5	6.7	6.0	-0.6	2.7	8.2	7.6	2.3	-1.4	5.7	5.0
2	3.5	3.85	4.45	4.5	4.63	4.9	4.7	4.8	4.5	4.9	4.3		
3	20.3	23.0	22.1	22.2	23.1	20.0	25.0	25.6	24.7	21.3	19.3	23.2	22.7

1 – GDP; 2 – GDP % on education; 3 – % of state budget on education; 4 – % of state education budget on pre-school

Sources: (NSC) (EFA) (UIS 2012) (NSC) (updated official) (UIS 2012) (EFA) (EDS 2020)

The above table show the effects of the political crises on GDP. The country was showing signs of recovery from the global economic crises of 2008 and GDP, which had slowed to 2.3 per cent in 2009 and was expected to rise to 4.5 per cent in 2010. Instead, there was a retraction in GDP of -1.4 per cent – although the IMF (2012) reports a contraction of -0.5 per cent, which is as low as -2.4 per cent if income from gold is excluded.

Table 2, above, illustrates that despite continued political turbulence since gaining independence, The Government of Kyrgyzstan's commitment to education spending has been relatively consistent, even for times of economic contraction.: s. This is made possible, of course, only by taking on more national debt. Kyrgyzstan has the highest levels of external debt of all countries in Central Asia amounting to almost half of its GDP that requires up to 13 per cent of the annual budget to service (GoK, 2012). While this extensive borrowing will have deep social, political and economic ramifications for the country over

the mid-to-long term, as even the current level of debt would take a generation to repay, maintaining levels of spending in the education sector is indispensable to lasting reform.

What is significant, however, is that the general policy direction in education has remained steady through the period of political turmoil and changes. This direction – with its core commitments to poverty alleviation, equity, quality, and stressing the importance of pre-school education – was first expressed in the Education Development Strategy 2007-2010 (GoK, 2006). The steady policy orientation is due in large part to the on-going close collaboration with international donors, particularly in the education sector, as the country is also a long-term recipient of international aid. Overall aid amounted to US\$ 294 million by 2007. For the education sector alone, aid totalled US\$ 84.2 million from 1997-2010 (Builasheva, 2010). This is a very small amount when compared, for example, with the billions of dollars that the US provides, mostly for military spending, to Israel (about \$3 billion annually since 1985), Egypt (about \$1 billion in 2012) or Pakistan (about \$20 billion since 2001). Yet while these countries are aid-dependent in the sense that aid is essential to ensure US-friendly regimes remain in place, Kyrgyzstan is aid-dependent in the sense that it relies on external aid and expertise to assist in carrying out several of its own essential functions, particularly in policy and planning. The Education SWAp for 2012-2020 envisages overall donor support to education in the amount of a further US\$80 million; it signals a move by major donors to coordinated budget support from disconnected project funding.

Builasheva (2010) cites an unpublished OECD and WB joint education sector review which remarks that the development of the EDS 2020 was primarily an, “externally driven process that was based on a weak needs assessment and situation analyses”, instead of being based on an evaluation of the previous education development strategy, the EDS 2007-2010. The main catalyst for the early development of the EDS 2020, according to this joint report, was the envisaged SWAp for education, which created pressure for the EDS 2020 to be sketched out well ahead of the intended start date.

A UNICEF analysis of donor involvement in the country (Steiner-Khamsi & Chachkiani, 2008), points out that the Catalytic Fund EFA-FTI grant to Kyrgyzstan was perceived as, and largely implemented as, a World Bank project rather than a multi-donor-supported, fast-track initiative. This perception was also held by the Project Implementation Unit [PIU] staff who regarded themselves to be primarily accountable to the World Bank, not the MoES.

However, despite debates about international donors dominating national policy discourse, the Kyrgyzstan government has shown a welcome consistency in its policy on education reform. This report will confirm that the EDS 2020 and the APED 2012-2014 are in keeping with earlier directions laid out in, the Country Development Strategy for 2007-2010 (GoK, 2006), the passing of the Pre-school Law in April 2009 (GoK, 2009) and numerous other documents. It will also show that the government has clear ownership of the EDS 2020 and is actively leading on the first three-year action plan for its implementation, the APED 2012-14.

The strengthening commitment of the government of Kyrgyzstan to implement sounder policy (i.e. policy goals that further, *inter alia*, inclusion and equity, quality, financial accountability, better systems and management ) is also pointed out by international commentators and Kyrgyz researchers on teacher policy (Steiner-Khamsi, *et al*, 2007;

Teleshaliyev, 2011), donor involvement (Steiner-Khamsi & Chachkiani, 2008; Schmidt, 2012) and disability rights, care and education (Kokina & Bagdasarova, 2013; Lapham, 2013). This commitment has also been noted by national donors and partners (OECD, 2009; EUEAS, 2010) and other reports by UNICEF (McLean & Orozova, 2006; Nauman, 2012) and USAID (Konurbaev, 2012; Tvaruzkova, M. & Shamatov, 2012). However, most of these commentators also observe that significant gaps remain between government policy and its ability to implement said policy; they make a point to identify the capacity shortfalls and various other bottlenecks and problems. These are discussed more fully in the appraisal of the EDS 2020 and the APED 2012-2014 that follows in *Part 2*.

The Development Partner Coordination Council (DPCC), which was established in 2001 to coordinate and harmonise development aid (EUEAS, 2010), also serves as a useful mechanism to ensure greater accountability of donors to government and other national stakeholders. It is worth recalling three risks that seemed pertinent to the authors of the UNICEF report on the involvement of international donors in the education sector in Kyrgyzstan. These were: 1) that the SWAp 2012-2020 and the EDS 2020 are conceived and will be implemented as stand-alone projects rather than strategies to effect systems change; 2) that they will be donor-driven, donor-administered, donor-implemented and will consequently not build capacity in national institutions and; 3) that they enjoy multi-donor engagement only at the approval stage, but are then managed by one donor with little continued involvement from other donors and stakeholders (Steiner-Khamsi & Chachkiani, 2008). Though these concerns may have been initially justified, they do not appear to apply now to the EDS 2020 or the APED 2012-14; furthermore, the SWAp 2012-2020 (EUEAS, 2010) adopts an approach to ensure that these concerns not come to fruition. The apparent mismatch of earlier fears with current reality is good news.

The Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness was signed in March 2005 by over one hundred aid-recipient countries, including Kyrgyzstan, and their major active donors. The declaration enforces five principles — full ownership by recipient countries, the alignment of donor support with sector strategies at national level, harmonisation of the activities of donors and partners, managing for results to focus on implementation and mutual accountability to ensure more equal partnerships and a commitment to openness (DAC, 2005). In the OECD-DAC report on alignment and harmonisation in Kyrgyzstan in 2005, which focused on the National Poverty Reduction Strategy [NPRS], it was noted that donors used government systems less than all other countries in the survey (OECD-DAC, 2006). Procedures such as disbursement, procurement, audit, monitoring and evaluation and reporting were used in no more than 2 per cent of projects, as opposed to averages of about 30 per cent for other countries surveyed. The GPE's exercise on monitoring aid effectiveness in the education sector (Schmidt, 2012), which was launched in 2011 but undertaken in Kyrgyzstan in April 2012, used the OECD-DAC indicators and instruments allow comparison. Although data limitation did not allow a full comparison, the results indicate that the pattern of use of country systems in education has not shifted at all (Schmidt, 2012); if anything it is lower than the usage report for the NPRS in 2005. This reveals that a low-level of trust in using government systems is highly persistent. It is a matter the DPCC and the Government of Kyrgyz Republic will have to address directly if capacity development in these procedural areas is going to be taken at all seriously. The GPE report on aid effectiveness does not provide an overall conclusion, but aid effectiveness in the country 'passes the test' on ownership, managing for results and

mutual accountability; aid effectiveness in the country 'fails the test' on alignment and harmonisation.

Donor partners have identified that urgent work on alignment and harmonisation needs to be undertaken if the Paris Declaration is to be upheld in Kyrgyzstan. Alignment and harmonisation are the more technical of the Paris Principles; the EU (EUEAS, 2010) identifies five capacity constraints that present obstacles for reform in Kyrgyzstan. These constraints include: i) frequent changes in middle and senior management; ii) inadequacies within legislative and regulatory frameworks; iii) a lack of proficiency in management and administration; iv) gaps in the availability of crucial technical skills and; v) poor coordination between government ministries. The weakest performance areas in government are considered to be internal and external audits, which are complex procedures in themselves and linked to broader governance issues. Building capacity in this area is a key priority for the EUEAS, the WB and DfID through the Multi-donor Trust Fund to support Public Finance Management (PFM) (EUEAS, 2010).

### 1.3 The available baseline data for appraising the EDS 2020 and the APED 2012-14

Three inter-connected data frameworks guide the short discussion of the available indicators that follows, official state data, data collected by external agencies, data collated for the GPE:

1. The official national approach to data collection determines not only what is monitored and measure in the country and provides the necessary information for budgeting and financing (see NSC, 2011);
2. The set of priorities related to the achievement of the six EFA goals and the process for the compilation and analysis of a comparative international set of indicators driven by UNESCO, all of which are available for Kyrgyzstan and of which national donor partners are cognizant (NSC-UNICEF, 2011; GMR, 2011). The two PISA studies (see OECD & WB, 2011) have also shaped policy thinking at national level and parameters for monitoring what matters to UNICEF are drawn in a comparative analysis of the available data-bases on education (Amon, 2012);
3. Three of the five priorities of the GPE 2012-2015 strategy (GPE, 2012): girls' education, early grade reading and numeracy, and teacher effectiveness. A broader formulation of two of these three GPE priorities is necessary for the meaningful monitoring of education indicators in Kyrgyzstan: equity and education inclusion not only girls' education and education quality not only early grade reading and numeracy. Teacher effectiveness is an important inclusion in the priorities for GPE and effective teachers are indispensable if equity is to be meaningful and if quality is to be achieved.

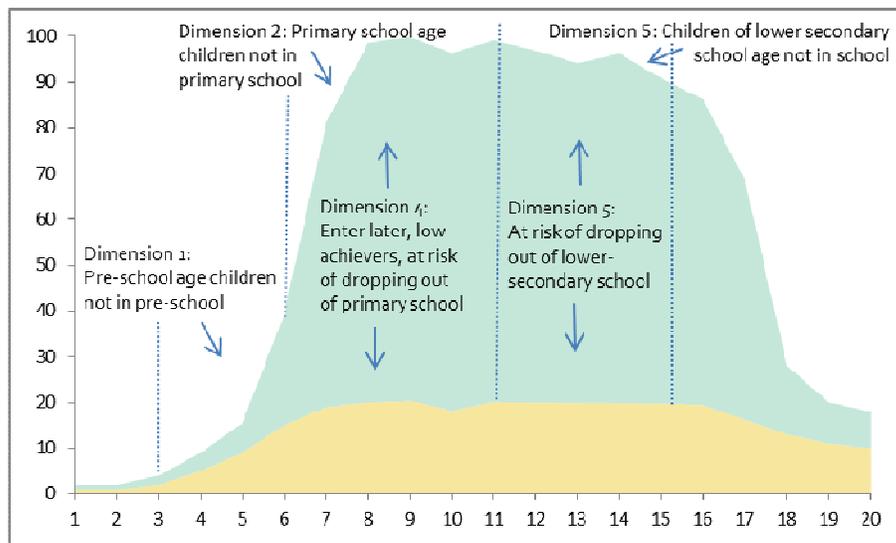
These suggest four headings for the discussion on the baseline data that follows: *inclusion, quality, teachers and education finance*.

#### 1.3.1 Inclusion

In terms of what is perhaps the key indicator for EFA, the number of children in primary school, Kyrgyzstan appears on the surface to be doing quite well. Gross enrolment rates for primary school are in the region of 100 per cent, with no observable differences for boys and girls (the gender parity index is close to 1); gross enrolment rates for secondary school are around 93 per cent. However, gross enrolment data masks the most information about inclusion: it includes overage (or underage) children and the figures reflect official enrolment not actual attendance, which is always lower. Nevertheless, these figures

remained consistent over the five years 2006-2010. Reliable net enrolment data is harder to obtain because it reports how many children of the appropriate age for each grade are enrolled; this requires an additional step in data collection that should be verified by independent research. Reliable data on actual attendance requires data collection at later points in the school year as well as additional research capacity. The official statistics for net enrolment reflect a drop from 88.5% to 86.4 per cent for primary school from 2006 to 2010, but even these data do not provide adequately textured information to tell the real story of education inclusion in Kyrgyzstan.

*Figure 2: Dimensions of exclusion from education in Kyrgyzstan for ages 1-20 in 2005 (Adapted from: www.create-rpc.org)*



A recent study by the Global Out-of-School Children Initiative<sup>iii</sup> (OOSCI), sponsored by national donor partners, provides a closer analysis of out-of-school children (Mambetaliev & van Cappelle, 2012). The study adapts Keith Lewin’s six “zones of exclusion” (Lewin, 2007), to identify five dimensions of exclusion from education in Kyrgyzstan. See *Figure 2* above. The OOSCI study identifies the following groups of particularly “at risk” children in Kyrgyzstan at the margins of these dimensions: children with disability, children without one or both parents, children in new settlements (*novoistroiki*), rural migrant children, boys from low-income families, working children, street children, children affected by ethnic conflict and those in intersecting risk groups. However, the OOSCI study uses the UNICEF MICS 2005 data, which reveals that only the top 20 per cent of the population is unaffected by poverty (McLean & Orozova, 2007); *Figure 2* thus may present a fuller picture of risk from education exclusion in Kyrgyzstan than a bland reading of the gross enrolment data suggest. The OOSCI study strategically targets smaller numbers of children in specific at risk groups; its five dimensions do not prioritise children from birth to three years-of-age or young children who do not attend or who are at risk of dropping out of high school. Advocates for the efficacy of birth-to-three interventions and the importance of programmes for unemployed youth will quibble with what clearly are difficult policy choices given scarce resources.

The study estimates, based on net attendance data, that over twice the number of children were out-of-school than the official government figures suggested in 2009 (66,418 as

opposed to 29,000), i.e. 4.7 per cent of children in primary school and 8.2 per cent of children in lower secondary school, as opposed to the official estimate of 3 per cent of children for the same age range. It also finds that the number of out-of-school children has been increasing from 2004 and identifies important intervention priorities, such as that 43 per cent of children with disability were out-of school in 2009, as well as that 40 per cent of children from the ethnic Lyuli minority are enrolled in school and those that do attend, do so irregularly. The Lyuli are routinely overlooked in policy, only 80 have completed school and only 2 are known to have a tertiary qualification (Mambetaliev & van Cappelle, 2012). This minority group faces the prejudice typically reserved for Roma and other travelers across Europe and Asia.

EFA Goal 1, to expand comprehensive ECD especially to vulnerable groups, coincides with Lewin's first zone of exclusion: "children who have never been to pre-primary". Kyrgyzstan has made meaningful advances in access to ECD through adopting more innovative approaches. The number of children in ECD services increased from 9.8 per cent in 2005 to 14.5 per cent in 2011, the actual numbers of children increased from 54,365 to 98,706 in 2012 (latest information from the NSC). This growth is mostly in the rural areas through the drive to establish Community-based Kindergartens (CbKs), by the ADB, AKF and UNICEF. 279 kindergartens were established over the period in the remoter *oblasti* of Batken and Naryn and the rural hinterland of the Osh *oblast*. In March 2011, the 240-hour school readiness programme was implemented. This does not fulfill the goal for comprehensive ECD envisaged in EFA Goal 1, but it is nevertheless a major step forward. Largely through utilizing local schools and teachers from the lower grades 51 per cent of children were reached through these services in 2011 (MoES, 2012c).

### 1.3.2 Quality

The Comparative Analysis of Databases study for UNICEF (Amon, 2012) makes the point that the readily available databases in Kyrgyz Republic provide mostly quantitative data such as enrolments, numbers of teachers, and number of schools, as well as inventories of equipment and facilities and other budget-level information; this is all important information for budget management.

While "input-side" data provides proxy information for education quality in schools in Kyrgyzstan, it gives a good idea of the context in which quality teaching and learning currently need to prevail. For example, the number of schools with equipped classrooms for the 2011/12 academic year is relatively low for the natural sciences. In physics, chemistry and biology; only 64 per cent of schools overall are adequately equipped – 80 per cent in urban areas, 60 per cent in rural areas (NSC, 2011). The percentage of equipped classes for mathematics and computer sciences is reported as somewhat higher: 81 per cent overall; 90 per cent in urban areas and 79 per cent in rural areas. This does not mean, however, that computer science classrooms have computers, functioning or otherwise. Official NSC statistics report that the average number of computers per school is 9, but that of the over-nineteen-thousand computers in schools, 17 per cent are not working; this percentage increases to 19 per cent for rural areas. Additionally, schools are poorly equipped for online communications: roughly 9 per cent have internet connection nationally, although a lot more schools are online in Bishkek and Osh cities (32 per cent and 20 per cent respectively), and no more than 2 per cent of schools nationally have their own websites (NSC, 2011). There is a prevailing perception, or perhaps hope, among policy makers, parents and pupils that computers are synonymous with quality of education. There is no data internationally

to support this hope and it can be significantly misplaced, but it is sure that computers, and particularly internet connectivity, are part of a quality learning experience. ICT also develops important skills for employment, informed citizenship and personal empowerment.

The number of schools provided with books is too low to support quality in education. 13 per cent of schools with instruction in Kyrgyz (i.e. 80 per cent of all schools) had less than half the books they need at the start of the 2011/12 school year, whereas 32 per cent of schools with instruction in Russian have less than half the books they need. For the same academic year, only 10 per cent of schools regard the provision of study guides and learning material needed to support the curriculum as good, for the majority (74 per cent) it is satisfactory and it is unsatisfactory for the remaining 16 per cent of schools. The content of the available material was regarded as unsatisfactory by one-third of all schools.

The availability of quantitative data such as this bodes well for inventory and budget management and the development of a national education management information system – EMIS. However, the readily available information does not include adequate and consistent coverage of results-oriented data such as exam results, or learning achievement tests. The available information on learning outcomes, which describes education quality better but still not fully, includes: national testing data for *Grades 4 & 8* for exams that were carried out in 2007 and 2009, the PISA results for 2006 and 2009, accumulated data from smaller scale tests and several other smaller studies.

The comparison of the 2007 and 2009 National Assessment of Student Achievement for *Grades 4 & 8* (CEATM, 2009) illustrates the fact that two data points do not make a trend. Despite reliable research and analysis the comparison is not yet able to yield significant information. Subjects that are assessed include mathematics, reading and comprehension and the natural sciences – biology, chemistry, physics and physical geography. The comparison of *Grade 4* results shows an inexplicable decline in the level of reading and understanding from 2007 to 2009. More in line with expectations perhaps, the mathematics results for *Grade 4* show the greatest improvement in Russian-medium schools; the *Grade 8* results show a clear improvement in Russian, Kyrgyz and Uzbek-medium schools, although with a greater improvement in Russian-medium schools. The strongest improvements from 2007 to 2009, in all subjects, are consistently in Bishkek. A third set of data may begin to show some interesting trends and it is a pity there are no immediate plans to fund another study.

The PISA 2009 data (OECD, 2009) included 4,986 15-year olds and 173 secondary schools (116 rural schools, 20 in *oblast* centres, 28 in Bishkek) and was undertaken by CEATM. Kyrgyzstan scored lowest in three PISA subject areas: reading literacy, mathematical literacy, and scientific literacy. Over 80 per cent of students did not achieve the minimum standards in these skills areas.

The PISA test has 6 levels of competence: *Level 1* is below the minimum standard, *Level 2* is low but above the minimum standard, *Level 6* is highly advanced. In mathematics, only 13.4 per cent of students from Kyrgyzstan perform at *Level 2* and above, very few perform at *Levels 5 & 6*. Only 18 per cent of students perform science literacy tasks at *Level 2* and above; and only 16.8 per cent of students perform reading literacy above *Level 2*. Girls consistently do better than boys in all of these areas.

Interestingly, students from Kyrgyzstan enjoy reading more than students in all OECD countries: as much as 14.5 per cent of students reported that they read for more than 2 hours a day. Only Azerbaijan reports a higher number of students that read for more than 2 hours a day at 15.2 per cent. The index for remembering and understanding in Kyrgyzstan and Azerbaijan is the least of all countries in the study. The placement of both countries at the extremes in these areas is anomalous as there is no established association between reading enjoyment, and remembering and understanding.

PISA data internationally shows that students with pre-school experience perform better at age 15 than those with none. In OECD countries the average points difference in the total PISA score between students who have been in pre-school for longer than a year and those who have not is 54 points; this difference is 72 points in Kyrgyzstan, which dramatically underlines the importance of pre-school in the country.

Even though a comparison of the PISA 2006 with the PISA 2009 results is not adequate to reveal a consistent trend, it is encouraging to note that there is a clear improvement in the percentage of students achieving minimum standards from 2006 to 2009. A closer study of the data would be able to reveal the geography of this improvement more exactly. Basic skills in reading improved from 11.8 per cent of students to 16.6 per cent of students between 2006 and 2009; basic skills in mathematics improved from 10.6 per cent to 13.1 per cent; and basic skills in science improved from 13.6 per cent to 18.3 per cent of students.

While it may not be essential for informing policy decisions to repeat PISA in the next round, participation in PISA towards the end of EDS 2020 would provide invaluable information for evaluation of the strategy and for informing policy directions thereafter. The funding shortage that prevents a continuation of national assessment of student outcomes in *Grades 4 & 8* is regrettable, as developing national capacity and a national data bank of consistent outcomes data are crucial for informing the pedagogy that will improve quality. An assessment of student outcomes should be tied more closely to teacher-training, both pre-service and in-service; as well as to ongoing research to inform teaching methods, the curriculum and the content and structure of learning materials to support curriculum.

The World Bank (Hou, 2011) and the OECD in its joint Lessons from PISA report (OECD & WB, 2011), characterise the country's performance on PISA as, "high on spending, poor on outcomes" given that over 20 per cent of the national budget is spent on education. It would be unfortunate to infer from this that spending does not matter. Kyrgyzstan has the lowest GDP of all PISA countries as well as the lowest per-capita cost. These indicators consistently correlate with student achievement in PISA. It should not be a surprise, therefore, that the country did not perform well. For even though the percentage of the national budget spent on education is high, the actual money spent per-capita is comparatively low. PISA performance thus confirms the fundamental policy direction that relatively higher spending in education needs to be maintained if quality is to improve.

### 1.3.3 Teachers

Teachers in Kyrgyzstan suspended work in a nation-wide strike in December 2010, towards the end of a particularly turbulent year. Teachers earned an average of \$75 per month, well below the average public servant salary of \$144 per month (USAID 2011). Other reports give different amounts of between \$30 and \$60 per month for teachers salaries at that time and contrast national per capita income which was \$183 in 2009 (Eurasianet, 2011). Due to

the low salaries and the diminished social status of the profession, teacher numbers had been falling over at least the past five years from 73,620 at the start of 2006-07 year to as low as 69,062 for the start of the 2010-11 year in September 2010 (NSC, 2011). Official teacher shortages were in the region of 4-5 per cent, but a study by UNICEF (Steiner-Khamsi *et al.*, 2009) reveals that the actual shortages are far higher. The study finds that the official data is under-reported, as it does not take into account, for example, teachers taking on additional classes, cancelled lessons, prolonged absenteeism, teaching classes not in their subject area, or bringing back retired teachers, all of which are strategies devised by teachers and schools to cope with the shortages. The authors use a case study methodology in 10 schools to understand teacher shortages and the strategies that schools and teachers devise; they identify 11 indicators that will help policy-makers understand the extent and nature of the problem. They propose an exact measure of  $T_{vac}$ , based on 8 of the indicators, which provides, "an exact measure of teacher shortages as it relates to the quality of education." (Steiner-Khamsi *et al.*, 2009:6) Used to recalculate teacher shortages, reveal that the actual shortage is as high as 23 per cent. The calculation is given below in Figure 3 (Steiner-Khamsi *et al.*, 2009:6).

Figure 3: Calculating teacher shortages that affect education quality

$$T_{vac} = \sum CANC + PROF + NSP + UNIS + RET + OTHS + MUL + UND$$

- CANC = Number of teachers that would be needed in order to avoid the cancellation of subjects or lessons
- PROF = Number of teachers without teacher training who work as teachers
- NSP = Number of teachers who teach subjects for which they have not been trained
- UNIS = Number of correspondence students and other university students working as teachers
- RET = Number of retired teachers working in schools
- OTHS = Number of teachers from other schools working at the school
- MUL = Number of teachers with multiple *stavkas* (i.e. teaching loads) (more than 1.5 or more than 2 *stavkas*)
- UND = Number of foreign language classes not divided into groups because of teacher shortages

The new government that was formed after the crisis in 2010 moved decisively to address the inequity in teachers' salaries, as the PISA 2009 study also confirmed that low teacher pay and low moral are directly related to low student achievement (OECD-WB, 2010). The average salary range more than doubled to US\$150- US\$185 per month in May 2011 (USAID, 2011). The salary model was designed to attract young teachers and reward performance and was developed by the MoES with technical assistance from USAID. Teacher's salaries now consist of three parts: a base salary (including *nadbavka*, supplements), pay adjustments for rural and mountainous regions, and bonuses of 10 per cent for performance (USAID, 2011). Pre-school teacher salaries were increased as well and they are now paid on the same scales as school teachers. This has had a huge effect on morale and strengthened the social status of pre-school teachers significantly.

In the 2011/12 academic year, over 80 per cent of teachers in Kyrgyzstan were women, over 50 per cent of whom have been in the profession for over 15 years. It is thus an ageing cadre, many of whom were teaching in Soviet times. Teacher numbers had dropped by 4,558 from 2006/7 to 2010/11, but increased by 6440 when the government increased teacher salaries in May 2011. There were 75,502 teachers in the country in the 2011/12 academic year.

Table Number of teachers,	3: Number of teachers	Length of Service				Out of which female	Education Level			
		< 5 years	5-10 years	11-15 years	>15 years		higher	incomplete higher	secondary professional	out of which higher

length of service, sex, education level	Academic year											
	2009/2010	71,172	13,467	12,200	9,140	36,365	58,660	57,827	4,895	7,391	6,514	1,059
			19%	17%	13%	51%	82%	81%	7%	10%	9%	1%
	2010/2011	69,062	12,381	11,103	8,454	37,124	56,907	56,816	4,451	6,915	6,201	880
			18%	16%	12%	54%	82%	82%	6%	10%	9%	1%
	2011/2012	75,502	15,611	12,409	9,025	38,457	62,424	63,155	4,331	7,162	6,440	854
			21%	16%	12%	51%	83%	84%	6%	9%	9%	1%

Table 3: suggests that younger teachers left during the turbulence of 2010 and that older teachers remained, some may even have returned. The most significant growth is that there are 5,517 teachers with higher education in 2011/12 than 2010/11, which strongly suggests that more professional young people are being attracted to teaching now that the wages have improved.

Teacher pupil ratios for Kyrgyzstan are on par with OECD countries for primary and secondary schools combined 15:1 (1,015,172/68,429) for 2011-12. The pupil-teacher ratio for primary schools is 13:1 in Germany, 18:1 in the UK, 14:1 in the US 14 and 16:1 in Kazakhstan 16. Interestingly, the pupil teacher ratio for primary school in Kyrgyzstan is 24:1 (412,773/16,959); calculated for secondary school it is 14:1 (602,399/43227). Neither of the figures used in the calculation for Kyrgyzstan take into account the 8,243 music, sports, art or labor training teachers who would have to be distributed between primary and secondary, or perhaps serve both. The World Bank and OECD think that this is an area where efficiencies can be made and that the ratio should be allowed to go up to about 20:1 overall (OCED & WB, 2011; Hou, 2011). This may be a policy option that will have more acceptance now that teachers' salaries are higher. While it is true that smaller pupil-teacher ratios have little effect on learning outcomes (obviously within sensible limits), the UNICEF teacher study suggests that the effects of any adjustment to teaching numbers and work load would need to be carefully studied if quality is not to be adversely affected.

#### 1.3.4 Finance

The available data on education finance in Kyrgyzstan is not fully consistent across the various sources, nevertheless the overall trends seem to be clear. The main features are that the percentage of GDP spent on education has grown from below 4 per cent just over a decade ago to probably just below 6 per cent in 2012 (see Table 4 below and also Table 2 above for the longer trend). The percentage of state budget expenditure on education has remained between 21 per cent and 26 per cent over the last decade but fell below 20 per cent to 19.3 per cent as a result of the events of 2010. Pre-school expenditure has grown very significantly from 381,6 million Soms in 2006 to 1,747 million Soms in 2012 (from 6 per cent to 9.4 per cent of the education budget) – between 4 and 5 times as much as it was 6 years ago.

As has been pointed out, the state has used deficit spending to maintain levels and increase education spending and was able to cover only 89.4 per cent of the planned budget expenditure in education in 2010 from state coffers.

Table 4: State expenditures on education

(in million Soms)	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
% GDP growth	2.7	8.2	7.6	2.3	-1.4	5.7	5.0
GDP % on education (NSC)	4.7	4.8	4.5	4.9	4.3		
% of state budget on education (NSC) (updated official)				21.3	19.3	23.2	22.7
Budget deficit as a % of GDP			2.2/0.7	-	10.5	4.9	7.2
Annual education budget				9,616,6	11,498,4	12,473,3	
Amount spent on pre-school				825	1,003	1,337	1,747
% of state education budget on pre-school (EFA) (EDS 2020)	7.1	7.6	8.2	8.1	9.4	7.9	9.4
State expenditure on education	6,315.7	9,176.5	11,116.3	12,541.6	12,822.9		
% of GDP	5.5	6.5	5.9	6.2	6.0	Data	from
% of state budget	25.0	25.6	24.7	21.4	18.6	NSC	Statistical
Amount spent on pre-school	381.6	536.5	730.3	870.9	1,038.1	Bulletin	
% spent on pre-school	6.04	5.85	6.57	6.94	8.10	(NSC, 2011)	

The balance of spending within the education budget is provided in *Table 5*, the figures are drawn from the NSC Statistical Bulletin (NSC, 2011). Primary education, *Grades 1-4*, averages 16.5 per cent of education budget spending over the period. Per capita spending per child in primary school increased from 2,376 Soms (US\$50) in 2006 to 4,700 Soms (US\$99) in 2010. The combined education and care components in the state kindergartens make them a lot more than primary schools, these per capita costs increased from 7,932 Soms (US\$168) to 14,679 Soms (US\$312) over the period. This large difference illustrates the relative expense of the state kindergarten system and underscores the realisation that expanding this form of provision is not a realistic option for pre-school.

*Table 5: State expenditures on education*

(in million Soms)	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
State budget expenditures on education, total	6,315.7	9,176.5	11,116.3	12,541.6	12,822.9
Primary education (Grades I-IV)	976.6 15.46%	1,423.1 15.51%	2,174.0 19.56%	2,161.6 17.24%	1,862 14.52%
Pre-school education	381.6 6.04%	536.5 5.85%	730.3 6.57%	870.9 6.94%	1,038.1 8.10%
Secondary education, professional & vocational	3,822.3 60.52%	5,757.5 62.74%	6,384.4 57.43%	7,549.9 60.20%	7,933.1 61.87%
Higher professional education	1,135.2 17.97%	1,459.4 15.90%	1,827.6 16.44%	1,959.2 15.62%	1,989.7 15.52%
Number of children in pre-school	48,109	51,123	55,925	62,590	70,313
Number of children in primary school	410,948	404,460	396,878	395,143	396,144

## Part Two

### 2.1 Technical appraisal of EDS 2020

The education system in Kyrgyzstan needs comprehensive reform. The EDS 2020 lays out a set of priorities that intend to reform education management, systems, human resources, pre-school coverage, inclusion in primary education and access to secondary education. It envisions a keener orientation to market needs in vocational training and senior secondary education, a revitalised tertiary sector, meaningful opportunities for life-long learning and a core commitment to education quality throughout the education system. On this complex and urgent task rests the country's hope for economic growth, social stability and, in many ways, a sense of national pride. An education system should never bear the burden for the development and transformation of an entire country, but social, political and economic change cannot succeed without a stable education sector that is delivering quality and extending equity.

The English version of the EDS 2020 is a translation of pages 18-62 of the 119 pages of the official Russian document which contains the National Concept for Education, the EDS2020 and the ADEP 2012-14 (*МОИ-КР*, 2020). On its own, it does not give sufficient detail to understand how a comprehensive systemic reform of the education system will be carried out. This is left for the subsequent action plans to lay down, the first of which is the APED 2012-14. The EDS 2020 provides a vision for what the system will look like by 2020, it identifies strategic priorities for getting there and puts forward key unifying ideas. The document could be better structured, but it serves its purpose as a document that must win support for change and catalyze reforms.

The unifying idea for the EDS 2020 is equal access to quality education. This is a phrase that can be an empty promise but is powerful if seriously intended: quality in delivery must be assured for reforms to be meaningful and more equal access to education must be real before reforms will be trusted. Quality and equity present significant challenges that will return to accuse if they are inadequately met. The strategy boils down to five essential innovations to meet this challenge:

1. Providing school preparation for all young children who cannot be reached through pre-school;
2. Fast-tracking quality in education through curriculum reform, strengthening the teaching profession and improving teaching;
3. Promoting inclusive education, while still maintaining special schools;
4. Developing a market-attuned education system with specialised professional choices at senior secondary level and a revitalised vocational education sector;
5. Introducing a multi-level, more accessible professional education system for adults.

The strategic priority for achieving this new system, and its core commitments to quality and equity, is to strengthen and reorganise the management of education: this includes building information systems, focusing on monitoring and evaluation, securing additional financing and strengthening capacity. The EDS 2020 sees strengthening management as a shift away from the current top-down approach and increasing individual responsibility : "От максимального регулирования с минимальной подотчетностью к минимальному регулированию с высокой подотчетностью – From maximum control with minimal accountability to minimal regulation with high accountability" (*МОИ-КР*, 2020:21). A more refined set of objectives and priorities are then put forward for each of six education

subsectors: pre-school education, general education and teacher support, primary technical-vocational education and training, secondary technical-vocational education and training, higher professional education, and adult and informal education.

The strategic conceptions for pre-school and general education and teacher support are dealt with in greater detail in this appraisal report as these are of primary interest to the Global Partnership for Education and, as the APED 2012-14 makes clear, they practically consume the entire budget for reform.

### 2.1.1 Pre-primary education and transition to primary education

The strategic approach of the EDS 2020 in the pre-primary area is to implement a school-readiness programme for 6-year olds and to enable more flexible arrangements for comprehensive care and education, especially community-based approaches. This stated priority reflects two insights into early childhood care and education in Kyrgyzstan: 1) as desirable as it may have seemed, it is not possible to provide comprehensive care and education to all the children who need it; roughly a third of the population still lives below the poverty line and at least another third is very poor—this is especially impossible through the current costly state kindergarten model and, 2) innovative pilot programmes in the country have shown that much can be done to reach underserved children through a more flexible and more cost effective approach. This includes the community-based kindergartens (CbKs) that are supported by certain international agencies and the school-readiness initiatives that were first introduced in the form of the 100 hour programme in 2006.

These innovations raise a number of important issues in relation to early childhood development more generally and in relation to the transition to primary education and the early years in school.

The essential innovation of the community-based kindergartens is the move from full-day education and care to a half-day shift system. Essentially what this means is that the children do not sleep in the pre-school; they have a meal, do educational activities and play. This is an entirely sensible and far more efficient approach in smaller and more rural communities where there is a family member who can look after a child for half-a-day. However, full-day care and education will continue to be in demand from primary caregivers who work all day and do not have the support of other family members. It took a while for the half-day shift approach to be accepted in the country as the cumbersome state kindergarten system was the only model around for several decades and it set the expectations of what child care and education should look like. In addition, many early childhood professionals in the country, particularly those responsible for delivering training through the KAE, believed that only a comprehensive model could adequately provide for the education and care needs of young children. If the declared EDS 2020 goal of, “20% of children in pre-school” is to be reached, it is likely that the growth will come from more flexible community-based approaches. This approach is gaining support; it has the added advantage in that it actively engages the *Ayil Okmotus* more directly and will assist in making these local structures more attuned to the education needs of their constituencies.

School-readiness, as part of a spectrum of care, or within the parameters of a more comprehensive programme has long been considered an important part of early childhood development. The ECD perspective on the transition to primary education and the early years of school, however, involves transforming the early grade classroom and the

activities and teaching methodologies used therein to child-centered methodologies and approaches.

The 100-hour programme covered 40,000 children in 2006 and reached 76,436 children by 2010 (Mambetaliev & van Cappelle, 2012); it was a pilot for the 240-hour programme, which was introduced in March 2011 as the main component of FTI II, and which achieved wide coverage of over 40,000 children in its first year. The 100-hour programme is still offered in parallel with the 240-hour programme for children who cannot attend the longer course; it reached 30,783 children in 2012, around 3 per cent of children entering school who had no previous exposure to pre-school education (MoES, 2012c). The 100 hour programme involves attendance at a regular primary school during the summer months for three classes a day, five days a week, and the extended 240 hours programme runs for four months in spring time and enrolls children who are to enter primary school in the fall. The EDS 2020 sets the target that 60 per cent of first grade entrants will be reached by these programmes by 2020. The organisers of the 240-hour programme believe they can reach 100 per cent of children not reached by a comprehensive pre-school programme, by 2020 (Mambetaliev & van Cappelle, 2012). The upcoming GPE-3 proposal extends this logic: it is structured around delivering a 480-hour, school-readiness programme, which will run over the course of a year and will target the most 'unreached' areas of the country.

The longer-term school-readiness programme is a welcome step forward that is expected to have greater impact on learning achievement in school. However, especially given that the 100-hour and 240-hour programmes were able to increase coverage widely and quickly, it has to be asked whether ECD has transformed the classroom or whether the conventional classroom has transformed ECD, at least as far as school-readiness is concerned. Nothing at all is said about child-centered approaches in the EDS 2020, which still retains a core commitment to the conventional state system whilst encouraging other options. While training capacity has been put in place to deliver the 100-hour and 240-hour programmes, the training needs to focus on delivering the content of a highly structured programme. It is unlikely to be adequate to help primary school teachers unlearn previous teaching approaches and adopt new child-centered methodology. The school-readiness programmes are a step forward, and there could be opportunities in subsequent years to provide school teachers with the support they will need to teach pre-school children. It will be very helpful if the proposed 480-hour programme in GPE-3 identifies and includes key indicators for quality assurance and a child-centered approach.

The other essential matter on which the EDS 2020 is silent is the cross-sectoral approach that is needed for effective ECD. It is understandable for an education ministry to want to concentrate on school-readiness, but there should be strong co-ordination with other sectors, particularly health and child protection. Extensive collaboration is needed at community level, as well as between ministries, if programmes are to meet the needs of young children. It is crucial to outreach to vulnerable children, enable early identification of disabilities; to emphasise the importance of nutrition and mental stimulation for children of 0-3 years-old, provide support for mothers with young children; and for support of *yasli* that provide child minding or crèche arrangements for younger children. These are areas where cross-sectoral collaboration is urgently needed and where other government departments and local government is better-placed than the MoES to take the lead. Cross-sectoral collaboration and coordination is precisely the policy principle that the EDS 2020 should set in place.

The *Law on Pre-School Education* (GoK, 2009c), which followed the *Code of the Kyrgyz Republic on Children* (GoK, 2006), both supported by UNICEF, reflect the serious attempt by the government to reverse the drastically declining trend in pre-school provision and adopt a more rights-based approach. The 2006 *Code on Children* recognises UN conventions on the rights of the child and other norms and standards and brought them into national law, it provided the legal basis for setting up a Department of Child Protection in 2006 (OECD-WB, 2011). The 2009 *Pre-school Law* guarantees the right to pre-school education, free medical care and requires the state to protect orphans and vulnerable children. Importantly, it also formally recognises CbK's and alternative approaches to pre-school education and stipulates a universal school-readiness programme.

### 2.1.2 School education: primary education and transition to secondary education

The strategic priority of the EDS 2020 for general schooling is the creation of optimal conditions and an optimal environment to support the achievement of quality education through a competency based approach. The section on school education in the EDS 2020 begins with a full discussion of the PISA results and what these mean for Kyrgyzstan, it moves on to a discussion of the curriculum, text books, school management and governance, teachers, inclusive education, infrastructure and maintenance, and finance and pedagogy. The document does not address these components in equal measure or in a particularly structured way, but it does make clear that a comprehensive reform of the education system is intended and that the government has already taken strides along that path. This report summarises each of the components using the same format, discusses each in turn and then gives an overall appraisal of the EDS vision for school reform.

#### 2.1.2.1) Achieving education quality

<b>Problem identification</b>	<b>The poor quality of education overall provided by schools and the education system in the country.</b>
Problems, evidence and data provided	The main catalyst for this realisation among policy makers was that country came last out of the 65 countries that entered the PISA rounds in 2006 and 2009. The second entry PISA 2009 showed modestly improved results: reading improved by 5%, mathematics improved by 3%, science improved by 5%.
Financial and budgetary implications	The country did not take part in the 2012 PISA round and may consider entry towards the end of the EDS. PISA costs are US\$250,000 unitised in three year period which covers the preparation, testing, data analysis and reporting.
Targets and indicators	Per capita GDP (US\$1,994) is lower in Kyrgyzstan than all 65 PISA countries: China, by comparison, is US\$5,340. Cost per student (US\$3,000) between 6 and 15 years-of age, were the lowest of the countries that entered: Russia, by comparison, spends US\$ 17,000. Kyrgyzstan had the highest indices for: shortages of teachers, lack of textbooks and inadequate infrastructure. Teachers' salaries are correlated with education quality: teachers will be paid 120% above the average national wage by 2020.
Actions already taken	Two PISA rounds in 2006 and 2009

The EDS 2020 recognises that the PISA results are ultimately not about student achievements but are about the country's attitude to, and investment in, education. The fact that the country twice came last in this international assessment appears to have been a positive spur for reform. PISA does not focus on the core areas of reading, mathematics

and science in a strictly academic sense, instead it looks at how students can apply these skill in real life PISA also provides insights into a range of non-cognitive factors such as learning self-concept, confidence and love of reading, all of which are important for success later in life. PISA appears to have had some effect on how policy makers understand education quality in Kyrgyzstan.

#### 2.1.2.2) A competency-based national curriculum

<b>Problem identification</b>	<b>To rework the national curriculum for schools so that it is competency-based.</b>
Evidence and data provided	Not provided in EDS 2020 document
Financial and budgetary implications	Not provided in EDS 2020 document
Targets and indicators	Not provided in EDS 2020 document
Actions already taken	National Framework Curriculum for general secondary education was developed in 2009. Subject curricula for Grades 1-4 drafted and approved; subject curricula for Grades 5-11 developed, draft curricula for "basic" and "profile" developed for Grades 11-12. The concept of profile education for Grades 10-11 was adopted at branch level in May 2009, this provides a normative legal framework Pilot syllabus for schools that switch to PCF is drafted, reducing academic load for Grades 1-11 by 10%. Modules on Interactive Teaching Methods developed for primary school teachers.

As work has been underway in this area for a few years, funded by SFK and other donors, not much new detail is provided in the EDS 2020. The curriculum work is linked to the goal of the EDS to improve education quality but the document does not put forward a strategy for assuring education quality.

#### 2.1.2.3) Textbooks and teaching aids

<b>Problem identification</b>	<b>The supply of textbooks and teaching aids to general educational organisations</b>
Evidence and data provided	Not provided in EDS 2020 document
Financial and budgetary implications	The 2011 budget allocated 200,000 Soms for textbooks. The LSG bodies are required to provide free books to rural school children from disadvantaged families, and must allocate money from their national budget allocation for textbook purchasing
Targets and indicators	Not provided in EDS 2020 document
Actions already taken	In 2008, 20 textbook titles were printed with a print run of 810,000 copies. The 2009/10 academic year, saw 47 textbook titles printed and 2,079,575 copies. In 2009, 10 million Soms allocated for reference books, which were distributed to school libraries

How extensive the limited supply of textbooks is or the difficulties associated with distribution are not described or analyzed in the EDS 2020 document. During the field visit for this appraisal document the ministry informed the DPCC meeting that the 100,000

million Soms allocated for textbooks in the 2012/12 budget year had to be cut to 63,000 and that the 37,000 would be found in the 2012/13 budget as a result of 2013 state budget deficit. Donor partners mentioned that cutting-back on the money allocated for textbooks was a perennial problem resulting from a shortage of funds.

#### 2.1.2.4) Per capita financing

<b>Problem identification</b>	<b>Effective school management and governance through per capita financing</b>
Problems, evidence and data provided	Some reference to the management model that was tested in Issyk-Kul and Talas in 2007/8 and 2008/9
Financial and budgetary implications	Public hearings on school budget execution and budget forecast for the year to come are held at schools that have adopted per capita financing
Targets and indicators	Not provided in the document, universal coverage implied
Actions already taken	717 schools have adopted per capita financing (1/3 of all schools) School boards were created

A few comments on the management model that was tested in Issyk-Kul and Talas for 2 years between 2007 & 2009 are linked with other sparse comments on per capita financing in a section of the EDS 2020 document that is not developed fully. The links between PCF, school management and budget transparency are implied but not explored.

#### 2.1.2.5) Attracting young teachers

<b>Problem identification</b>	<b>Attracting young teachers particularly to teach in rural areas</b>			
Problems, evidence and data provided	In relation to young teachers to work in rural areas: support for transportation and utilities provided in only 11 out of 55 raions; land for permanent local settlement provided in only 13 out of 55 raions.			
Financial and budgetary implications	As per new legislation every teacher should undergo training once in 5 years. LSG budgets should include travel costs for teachers.			
Targets and indicators	Percent of HEI graduates with a specialist diploma who are employed in schools at those with diplomas from SVEs (Pedagogical Vocational Schools)	19.3%	40%	60%
	% of students that continue pedagogic education at SVEs	43%	60%	80%
	% of students that continue pedagogic education at HEIs	63%	75%	90%
	Percentage of dropout during first year of professional work at school	20%	10%	5%
	Loss as a result of payment of state scholarships (students who have not worked required years)	45%	20%	5%
	% of teachers who are younger than 37 years-of-age	42,6%	48%	53%
	Enrolment at pedagogic departments for self-funded compared with state funded students	34 less (total 110)	same	30 more
	Annual coverage of teacher by retraining courses	8%	20%	40%
	Diploma of graduates of teacher and pedagogical training programme (bachelors, masters and specialist)	BA 1,6% MA 1.1% Sp.	BA 70% MA 30% Sp.	BA 80% MA 20%

		97.3%	0%	Sp.c 0%
	% of correspondence students in pedagogy departments	61%	40%	20%
	Relative salary of teachers compared with average national wage	61%	100%	120%
Actions already taken	Decrees № 530 and №912/1 of 2009 guarantee rights of teachers to be provided by local governments. Young teacher deposit: 2845 young teachers since 2005 have participated			

In terms of indicators, the section dealing with attracting young teachers to the profession is the most elaborated section in the whole document. Costings are not provided, however, and the section does not deal with the teaching profession as a whole, nor does it lay out a strategy for how teachers may be inspired and mobilised to contribute to achieving the goals of the EDS 2020.

#### 2.1.2.6) Inclusive education

<b>Problem identification</b>	<b>Reaching children with special education needs.</b>
Problems, evidence and data provided	In 2010, 10356 children with special needs are reached by education programmes, including 3670 of school-age, 2243 of preschool-age through 635 comprehensive schools. 2425 study in 15 specialised boarding school, 482 in 4 specialised comprehensive school and 1536 in 14 specialised kindergartens.
Financial and budgetary implications	Pedagogical--Medical-Psychological Counseling PMPC offices received 86,657 Soms from the Japanese Fund on Poverty Reduction (JFPR), received a further 772,412 Soms for equipment. 2010 35 pilot comprehensives school, 3 pilot auxiliary boarding schools, 2 pilot kindergartens receive equipment worth 1,468,991 Soms. 35 schools & 3 auxiliary boarding schools get teaching aids worth 1,615,685 Soms 51 computers to schools 19 for children trained at home worth 1,169,000 Soms Budget deficit led to the shrinkage of the extracurricular education sector from 91-42 in Jalalabad and from 12-9 in Naryn. However, Batken increased from 10-12, Isyk-kul from 12-15 and Osh from 16-19. Naryn has least coverage of extracurricular education institutions 4.5%; Bishkek has the most 20.7%.
Targets and indicators	In one year 1017 children with special needs were examined by PMPCs 2007/8 – 28 pilot education institutions 761 children reached 2010/11 – 1008 children reached 133 extracurricular institutions provide hobby classes for 79 thousand children (low income families) Only 7.8% of all schools are covered by non-school education
Actions already taken	Ongoing activities implied in the above. Decree № 667 of 1997 obliged local government to keep records on all children in the jurisdiction, this should include information on children with disability

The section of the EDS dealing with inclusive education lays out the needs and sets targets to improve and continue the current system of provision for special needs children. Inclusive education thus becomes inclusion of children with special needs in “separate” special institutions, a strategy for the inclusion of as many children with special needs as possible in mainstream education is not put forward in EDS 2020.

#### 2.1.2.7) Infrastructure, equipment and finances

<b>Problem identification</b>	<b>Recurrent infrastructure and equipment needs</b>
Problems, evidence and data provided	The foreseen demographic need is 420 new schools for 102,416 students. 351 schools are in need of minor repairs. Ayil Okmotus are responsible for upkeep, they have very little money and a lot of the buildings are very shabby and in need of equipment and furniture. Local government is also responsible for heating in winter, on average only 12% of the heating required is made available. The school land technically belongs to the Ayil Okmotus, this is often sold by the Ayil Okmotu to raise money.
Financial and budgetary implications And Targets and indicators	12,8 billion Soms required for 420 new schools (by 2020?) More immediate repairs in 351 schools for 530 million Soms A programme needs to be put in place to systematically replace all the equipment in all of the schools in the entire country: 46,000 school desks, 7,000 bookcases, over 6,000 tables, 6 thousand black boards. 400 million Soms is required. Canteen equipment (e.g. refrigeration, tableware) is urgently required to allow the school meal programme to operate. This is particularly urgently required for children from low income families who may not get enough to eat at home. Ratio of computers to student to go from current 1:57 to 1:30 (working computers) by 2020; Percentage of schools with internet access from 2.4% - 20% over the period;
Actions already taken	Laws passed: "On the state registration of the rights to real estate and the related transactions" and "On Education" ensure land is not privatised and local self-management passed on the <i>Ayil Okmotus</i>

While the above costs are listed, a comprehensive schedule of costs is not provided in the EDS. It can only be presumed the intention is to leave the actual costing to the 3-year plans. The costs outlined above to build, refurbish and equip schools with basic furniture (without pricing in computers, text books, other learning aids or kitchen equipment) are considerable at 13,730 billion Soms (US\$292,127,660) from 2012 to 2020, amounting to more than the entire national education budget for 2012.

#### 2.1.2.8) Challenges for pedagogy

<b>Problem identification</b>	<b>Curriculum overload, uneven performance between rural and urban students, falling achievement levels, inadequately-trained staff and other problems present problems for effective pedagogy.</b>
Problems, evidence and data provided	A lack of education competence and curriculum overload is cited as problems that need to be addressed: the learning load per student is 1088 hours in Kyrgyzstan as opposed to 893 hours in Russia and 750 in Japan. Unequal performance between urban and rural areas: rural students scored an average of 107 points in school leaving exams over the last few years, urban students scored an average of 121,5. Of the 3000 students who achieved honors in the 2011 exams on 95 were able to attain the required standards at the National Testing Centre for language, mathematics and national history. Low morale among teachers and a weakening teaching profession. Problems already mentioned with at risk students and lack of equipment.
Financial and budgetary	No additional provision is only 14% of the annual budget is available for non-staff related expenses and costs related to pedagogy have to compete with a range of

implications	other costs.
Targets and indicators	National tests for 9 <sup>th</sup> Grade; 11 <sup>th</sup> Grade; and 4 <sup>th</sup> Grade (pilot)
Actions already taken	Process to revise curriculum already underway.

These challenges confronting pedagogy are not presented in a section of the document devoted to quality, teaching, or pedagogy as might be expected, given the centrality of this idea in the EDS 2020. Rather, they are, however, referred to as, “актуальные проблемы – urgent problems” in a section which includes two points on education financing (*MOH-KP*, 2010:31). The only target mentioned in the strategy relates to the establishment of national exams for *Grade 9* and *Grade 11*, and an exam for *Grade 4* to be piloted, by 2020.

### 2.1.3 Appraisal of the Pre-School and General Education Components of the EDS 2020

This short appraisal of the pre-school and general education components of the EDS 2020 is in four parts: the conception of quality within the strategy; the conception of equity within the strategy, the fit between the pre-school and general education components within the overall strategic plan for the education sector and; the fiscal and financial position of the government and broad scenarios for the future.

#### 2.1.3.1 The EDS 2020 conception of quality in education

The idea of education quality in the EDS 2020 document is pervasive but is dispersed and not consolidated. Various elements of the strategy have to be pulled together to appreciate the full conception. Three interrelated clusters of ideas operate at the level of the school: a new approach to pedagogy, consolidation of teaching cadre, and the provision of adequate learning materials, facilities and equipment. A fourth cluster of ideas operates at systems level and functions to support quality education at school level: restructuring the education system, reforming management systems and education financing and national level assessment and testing. Each of the four idea clusters is appraised briefly here.

1. The new approach to pedagogy involves reworking the curriculum for a competency-based approach, developing new content that incorporates building a national identity for the Kyrgyz Republic and a market-related skills orientation. The EDS 2020 does not convey the extent of the work that has been done in this area and the involvement of teachers so far. It mentions a teacher manual on formative assessment and student-centered methodologies that were developed under the rural education project that looked at student appraisal in both Issyk-Kul and Talas *oblast*. The *MoES* plans to pilot the final *Grade 9 & 11* exams as part of the next Russian Education Aid for Development (READ) project executed by the World Bank. READ aims to help low-income countries strengthen the capacity of institutions to measure and assess student learning and to use information from assessments to improve teaching and learning. This work is curiously detached in the strategy from the reworking of the curricula to achieve quality in education. The connection between reworking the curriculum for a competency-based approach and the desire for a student-centered pedagogy and a market-professional orientation in the curriculum is not explained. More importantly the EDS does not convey an understanding of how quality education is linked to the consolidation of the teaching cadre, the improvement of facilities, the provision of learning materials and computers, or the feed-back loop from assessment and national

testing to formal training through KAE and teaching practice in the classroom. Dispersed work in these areas, even if well-intended and competent, does not automatically assure quality education will be achieved; achieving quality education will require very deliberate leadership. No recognition is evident in the strategy that this is needed or where it is to come from.

2. The consolidation of the teaching cadre in the EDS is comparatively detailed, 11 indicators are laid out that deal with attracting top graduates to the profession, improving working conditions and better salaries to retain teachers in the profession and the provision of ongoing training. However, while these measures will greatly improve the prospects of the profession and have already succeeded in attracting better qualified young teachers, they stop short of placing teachers themselves at the centre of rebuilding their own profession and leading the drive for quality education. This is at odds with the autonomy envisaged in the EDS 2020 for their students, who should be, “able to act independently, openly express their views; use creative and innovative approaches – способны действовать независимо, выражать открыто свое мнение; использовать творческие и инновационные подходы” (МОН-КР, 2020:20). The EDS 2020 only goes half-way to recognizing the contribution teachers can make in assuring quality, as work in teacher leadership and teacher professionalism shows internationally (Steiner-Khamsi & Weeks-Earp, 2001; Teleshaliyev, 2011). Teachers in Kyrgyzstan have been actively engaged in the working groups to develop the new curricula; the Trade Union of Education and Science Workers (TUESW) is active at a policy level and is engaged with the MoES on a number of working committees. The victory of the TUESW on wages in May 2011, means it is an empowered player and that finding ways to actively engage teachers would strengthen the social partnership around the EDS2020 and the country’s potential to meet its reform objectives. “Strengthening the teaching profession to assure quality education in Kyrgyzstan” would be a stronger way to conceptualise teacher in the EDS 2020 than the current mild formulation of “attracting young teachers to teach in rural areas”.
3. Given the lack of adequate investment in facilities and equipment for at least two decades and the additional need for computers, connectivity and new materials, it is not surprising that these material items and conditions are related to a conception of quality in the education system. There is no doubt that the learning environment will improve enormously and benefit both students and teachers if these plans are realised. However, the availability of these material things is not synonymous with quality. This is particularly true of computers and connectivity which will prove to be an expensive distraction if they are not used adequately in the learning process. The development and delivery of text books and learning materials is an urgent priority, which is recognised in the EDS 2020.
4. The foundations for improved outcomes at school level are, of course laid in the early years. However, “school-readiness” in the narrower sense that children are given an advance on core skills such as early reading and basic numeracy and that they are more emotionally prepared for the discipline and application to tasks that school involves, is not the most urgent priority of early childhood. Leading thinkers in the field and many practitioners point to the crucial importance of adequate nutrition, secure relationships and early stimulation in the home for the very young 0-3, and that support, encouragement and interested engagement by caregivers to be the key foundational

elements. This perspective asserts that the priority of policy should be to get the schools ready for children, not children ready for the school. As this appraisal has affirmed, the school-readiness programmes will provide much needed support for pre-school children and are a cost effective and understandable priority for an education-sector led strategy, but they are only a step in the right direction and are not sufficient in themselves. More robust strategies to foster a broader approach to supporting children in the early years would lay a stronger foundation for improved learning outcomes and education quality than a school-readiness programme. It would have been helpful, therefore, if the EDS 2020 gave stronger recognition to the importance of the wider spectrum of requirements that support early childhood development and the collaboration that needs to be built nationally to advance these in policy and practice.

### 2.1.3.2 The EDS 2020 conception of equity in education

The commitment to equity in the EDS is partly a consequence of the collapse of the former Soviet system and the great inequities that followed; a growing awareness of disability rights brought about through a growing civil activism and policy advocacy by international agencies, uneven regional growth, particularly continuing rural poverty, and the ethnic turmoil in the country's South of 2010. The Gini coefficient for Kyrgyzstan moved dramatically from 25.7 in 1993, where it was on par with Russia and Kazakhstan to a high 53.7 in 1998 (higher than Russia which only reached 48.7 in the same year) and has come down to a more equitable 36.2 in 2009 compared with Russia at 40.1 (Index Mundi, 2012), as a consequence of a greatly improved average GDP over the past decade and the policy commitments through the national poverty reduction strategies (see NPRS 2003-2005, and PRSP 2007-2010). The OECD study funded by the Soros Fund Kyrgyzstan on students with special needs (OECD, 2009) and the Movement of Young Disabled People (Движение молодых инвалидов), and For Life Without Borders (За жизнь без барьеров), Smile-Kg in Osh, and Umut Nadeshda (see particularly the case study on the project by Kokina & Bagdasarova, 2012) have pointed out that special institutions only cater for a minority of children with disability and inclusion in mainstream schools is needed to ensure the inclusion of the majority of young people with disabilities (EurasiaNet, 2012; Lapham, 2013).

The commitment to education for children with special needs in the EDS 2020 is commendable. But inclusion is broadly interpreted and is understood to mean inclusion in education even if this is provided within an exclusive setting. Given that over 40 per cent of children with disability are out-of-school (Mambetaliev & van Cappelle, 2012), inclusion even in this broad sense would be a step forward, but the EDS 2020 does not extend its reach sufficiently to include this as a target. Both the inclusion movement internationally and local activists understand inclusion to mean inclusion in the education mainstream, i.e. non-exclusive settings, with an acknowledgement that children with severe disabilities may need special care that is more effectively provided in exclusive settings. The former Soviet Union held a defectology approach to disability, which involved identifying the disability and putting in place specialist programmes, regimes and institutions, to deal with them. Given this history, it is reasonable to expect that the EDS 2020 would have been more explicit in laying out a position with regard to which children should be admitted to specialised institutions and when, as well as which children should be integrated within the education mainstream and when. There is tacit acknowledgement that local communities, and certainly the *Ayil Okmotus* and the Feldsher Accoucher Points

(фельдшерско-акушерских пунктов (ФАП), or FAPs, which are active in almost every community, play a key role in the identification and registration of children with disability and the decision about appropriate treatment, as the early recognition is so crucial a decision.

The OECD definition of special education needs includes children with physical disability, learning difficulties and social disadvantage (OECD, 2009). This is a large group and the country has understood that the best way to address social disadvantage is through a vigorous poverty reduction plan. However, the OOSCI study (Mambataliev & van Capelle, 2012) on children out-of-school has identified particular groups that should be prioritised in addition to children living with disability or learning difficulty, these include, street children, children without documents, children of migrants and those affected by ethnic conflicts. There is an opportunity cost to the silence of the EDS 2020 on these issues; it does not provide the clarity or leadership it should provide.

### 2.1.3.3 Education finance and management

The EDS 2020 is not a costed plan and it provides indications of certain costs and not others. The discussion on the APED 2012-14 allows a more detailed discussion of the costs of the first three-year implementation plan of the EDS 2020 and is helpful in illustrating the contribution of and collaboration with donor partners. Nevertheless, it does give sufficient information to merit a discussion of some of the key features of the envisaged financial and managerial arrangements for the EDS 2020 to be discussed here, these are: the macro economic situation, decentralisation to local government level, parent informal payments and budget transparency, and per capita financing and school management.

Although the macro economic situation has been discussed previously, it needs to be recalled here that the government is currently running a deficit (6.6 per cent of GDP in 2012 with increase up to 6.8 per cent envisaged for 2013) and that the country will be heavily debt and aid-reliant in carrying out the EDS 2020. The EDS2020 envisages significant, non-recurrent expenditure on capital and infrastructure; as well as rapidly depreciating items such as computers and, to a lesser extent, textbooks, which are likely to require replacement before 2020; and teachers' salaries have jumped very significantly, which will have a major impact on the annual budget for education. The strategy acknowledges that there needs to be an increase in the annual state budget for education, as not much is available to cover the costs envisaged in the EDS 2020 from the 14 per cent of the total education budget that remains after the deductions for salaries, social securities, meals and other staff related costs.

The current decentralisation means that only 9 per cent of the education budget is managed by the MoES, the bulk of the budget goes directly from the treasury to the *Ayil Okmotus*. These local self-governing bodies have shown that they will pick and choose from central government policy priorities according to the priorities they perceive themselves (not all local governments complied with support required for relocating and housing young teachers, the MoES reports). This means that the leadership the MoES is able to assert to drive through the policy objectives of the EDS is compromised. This arrangement also leaves school principals as much in the dark about the available budget as it does the MoES,. Arguably, the two levels of the system that most urgently need to know the status of the budget at school level currently have no control over it. Often, local self-governing bodies find it much more difficult to be impartial in times of ethnic strife, as they feel and

reflect the attitudes of their constituents far more directly and their responses are not always in the national good. This poses a risk for the inclusive vision put forward in the EDS 2020.

The long recent history of low teachers' salaries and inadequate school financing has resulted in increasing informal payments by parents to schools and sometimes directly to teachers, payments which parents felt they could scarcely afford themselves. The EDS 2020 is silent on this sensitive issue and it is not made explicit if per capita financing has helped to regularise this situation. PCF was first introduced in Issyk-Kul, Batken and Chui, is being scaled up in Osh and Talas in 2012-13 and in Jalalabad and Naryn in 2013-14 (WB, 2012). PCF should provide clear information to the school on the exact budget that is available, this should facilitate both management at school level and accountability to parents and communities as greater transparency of funding is made possible. For accountability to occur at the local level, consistent implementation and guidance needs to be enacted at a programme level. This is not explained in the EDS 2020, and if it is intended, it will be revealed in the discussion of the APED 2012-14 that follows.

#### 2.1.3.4 The fit between pre-school and general education and wider sector reform

The National Concept for Education and the EDS 2020 (MOH-KP, 2020) establish that comprehensive reform of the whole education system is the clear priority for Kyrgyzstan. The envisaged new structure, as a whole, will provide more entry points for professional and vocational education for adults (see *Figure 4* below). It will be a significant challenge to assure quality across this structure. This appraisal has pointed to the importance of an adequate foundation in the years of early childhood and the central role of teachers, which the strategy recognises, in ensuring quality within an education system. Another essential feature to enable quality would be the matching, in terms of competence levels, of the job market skills in general education *Grades 10 & 11* with the competencies acquired through the alternative entry options for vocational and professional education. In particular, the transferability of qualifications between the various options in the top structure, especially between *Grades 10 & 11* and primary vocational and secondary professional education, would ensure young people do not have to make mutually exclusive choices.

*Figure 4* below shows how the EDS conceives that restructuring the entire education system will help to create conditions for better quality. Greater attention is given to the foundations in early childhood, which envisages 20 per cent coverage in the pre-school system and 80 per cent through school readiness programmes.

*Figure 4: The Structure of the education system in Kyrgyzstan envisaged in the EDS 2020*

Adult education	Age	Grade	Post-graduate professional education (candidacy, post-graduate training, post-graduate, military academy, doctorate)		Additional professional education (for those holding vocational degree)			
	26		Higher professional education (master's programme)	Higher professional education (bachelor's programme)	Higher professional education (specialist's programme)	Informal adult education – courses, including those designed for self-improvement		
	25					Secondary professional education: graduates of the 9 <sup>th</sup>	classes or schools (with no	)
	24							
	23		Primary vocational education for	Secondary professional education: graduates of the 9 <sup>th</sup>	classes or schools (with no	)		
	22							
	21		Primary vocational education for	Secondary professional education: graduates of the 9 <sup>th</sup>	classes or schools (with no	)		
	20							
	19		Primary vocational education for	Secondary professional education: graduates of the 9 <sup>th</sup>	classes or schools (with no	)		
18								

	17	11	graduates of the 9th and 11th grades	Secondary general education (and profile grades)	and 11 <sup>th</sup> grades		
	16	10					
Compulsory education	15	9	Basic general education				Special schools for children with disabilities (with intact intellect)
	14	8					
	13	7					
	12	6					
	11	5	Primary general education				
	10	4					
	9	3					
	8	2					
	7	1				Special schools for children with disabilities	
	6	0	Preschool education	School preparation for non-pre-school children			
	5						
	4						
	3						
	2						
	0-1						

The range of expanded options envisaged at the school completion-level includes technical, professional and academic opportunities for school-leavers and “re-entry” opportunities for adults in professional training and short courses. The essential insight here is that these “push” and “pull” factors at either end of the school system (i.e. pre-school and post-school) greatly enhance quality at school level and make it worthwhile. A strong link is also implied in the strategy between quality and improved management throughout the system, which is based on improved information systems and better information afforded through reformed national testing. These systemic changes cannot assure quality in education by themselves, but taken as part of the spectrum of measure the EDS2020 envisages, they have an important contribution to make.

In terms of overall policy, it is interesting to note the importance of the PISA results in the conceptualisation of quality and that the country’s poor performance led to a mature and useful policy response. First, acknowledgement of the interdependence of quality outcomes and growth in GDP; second, a reminder of the importance of teachers ensuring a strong teaching profession to achieve quality; third, an affirmation of the importance of achieving equity for both quality across the systems and greater potential for more steady and more even growth in the national economy.

## 2.2 Technical appraisal of APED 2012-14

The Action Plan for Education Development for the first three-year period 2012-14 does not provide a narrative complement to the EDS 2020. It consists of a 52 page matrix (MOH-PK, 2020:64-116) and six Excel sheets that provide a detailed costing of each programme under the plan and details of contributions from other donors. Written at the end of the first year of the action plan, this appraisal report considers how and where the APED 2012-14 brings clarity through action to the EDS 2020 and assesses which of the activities are on track. This section of the appraisal looks at the overall financing of the APED 2012-14 and the financial allocations to the various programmes and reports on the progress on the

action plan at the end of the first year (2012) and its potential for the realisation of the goals of the EDS 2020.

### 2.2.1 Financing the APED 2012-14

*Figure 5: Sources of Funds for the APED 2012-14*

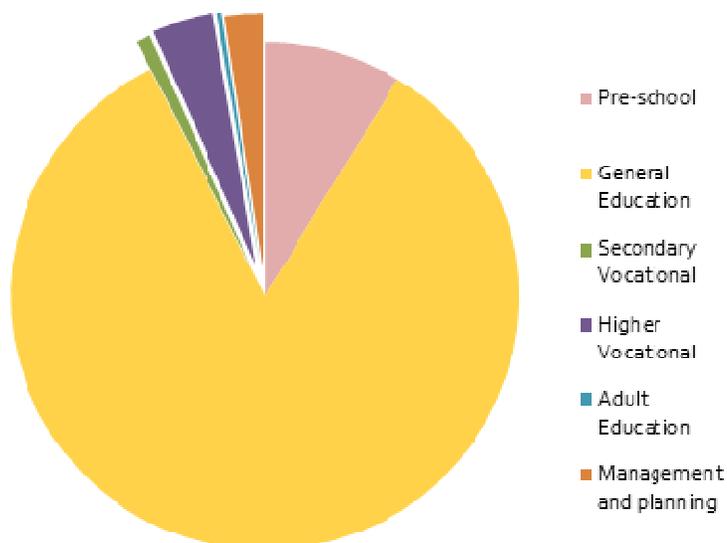
The main sources of finance for the APED 2012-14 are the state budget, which is dependent on fiscal contributions; the contribution from parent fees, which amounted to 14 per cent for the 2010 budget (Socium Consult, 2011) but which are not stipulated for the action plan, and the contribution from donor funds. *Figure 5* above gives a visual impression of the relative sizes of these contributions but does not include donor funds provided for the sector that were not part of a national plan before 2011.

*Table 5: Growth of the state budget through the APED 2012-14*

(in thousand Soms)	Parent fees, est. @14%	State contribution from fiscus	Total budget from state sources	New donor funds*	Total ADEP Budget	% increase on previous year	% increase from donor funds
2010	1770.54	10876.16	12646.7	0	-	-	-
2011	1958.24	12029.16	13987.4	0	-	10.60%	-
2012	2315.74	14225.26	16541.0	1077.40	17618.40	25.96%	32.91%
2013	2524.93	15510.27	18035.2	1658.90	19694.10	11.78%	56.35%
2014	2730.42	16772.58	19503.0	2552.40	22055.40	11.99%	66.91%

*Table 5* provides figures for the actual growth in the combined state budget including all sources of funds, which shows a significant growth of 58 per cent from 2012 to 2014. The percentage of the increase that comes from state funds decreases from 67 per cent to 33 per cent over the three years and the donor portion rises inversely from 33 per cent to 67 per cent. This switch over three years is not a cause for concern, it is positive in that it shows active donor commitment. It would be a mistake to expect that this would persist as a trend till 2020, therefore the two subsequent actions plans will need to be cognizant of this. Over the five year period shown in *Table 5*, the government budget for education is set to almost double. While the government has shown commitment to maintaining education spending, any significant increase in spending poses risks due to the country's uneven economic performance over the last decade, the not fully resolved political and social conflicts and the uncertain global economic climate. Macro political and economic considerations will ultimately determine whether education spending is sustainable over the longer term. The important thing for the moment is that the resources seem to be in place to meet the requirements of the APED over the remaining two years.

*Figure 5: Comparative size of different programmes within the APED 2012-14*



The APED 2012-14 consists of detailed plans for six priority areas based on priorities laid out in the EDS 2020: 1) pre-school education and children’s training for school, 2) school and out of school education, 3) secondary vocational education, 4) higher vocational education, 5) education for adults, and 6) management, monitoring and strategic planning in education.

The costings do not include the plans or reforms envisaged for Higher Professional Education envisaged in the original plan – Среднее профессиональное образование (MPH-PK, 2020:94), and which appear to be covered entirely from state funding sources.

The pie graph in *Figure 5* above shows how large the general education programme is in relation to the other programmes within the APED 2012-14; it commands 83 per cent of all funding. The pre-school sector comes a distant second with almost 9 per cent of the funding, with the remaining 8 per cent going to vocational and professional education and adult education. This establishes very clearly what the main priority is for the country and this must be respected. However, the pre-school programme is larger than the remaining four programmes in the APED 2012-14; this is significant and illustrates the government’s recognition of the importance of these early years as a foundation for the whole of education.

*Table 6: Contribution of donor funds to different programmes in the APED 2012-14*

APED Programme (in thousand Soms)	Total budget	Contribution from donors	Programme % of total	% of donor funds to programme
Pre-school	5,187,712	575,512	8.74%	10.88%
General Education	49,760,913	4,567,413	83.82%	86.36%
Secondary Vocational	525,002	79,166	0.88%	1.50%
Higher Vocational	2,304,142	35,015	3.88%	0.66%
Adult Education	187,269	4,869	0.32%	0.09%
Management and planning	1,402,743	26,643	2.36%	0.50%
	59,367,782	5,288,619	100.00%	100.00%

Thus, 93 per cent of the ADEP budget is devoted to pre-school and general education, as is 97 per cent of the contribution in donor funds, and these two components of the first action plan merit most of the discussion. Management and planning is important too if things are going to get done, but the 2.36 per cent of the budget this programme requires will need to be wisely spent.

This section proceeds with a closer look at financial plans for the pre-school, general education and monitoring and planning components of the APED.

*Table 7: Programme One: Pre-school education (financial requirements 2012-14)*

Tasks	Current expenses	Investment expenses		Totals				Total for task (and government %)
		internal sources	external sources	internal sources	external sources	internal sources	external sources	
Expand coverage through P-S classes	47,138 18%	2,525 8%	0	81,562 32%	47,138 16%	84,087 30%	131,225 (gov. cont. 36%)	
Maintain existing network	468 0.18%	0	37,200 100%	0	37,668 13%	0	37,668 (gov. cont. 100%)	
Expand alternative PSEOs	0	29,047 92%	0	2,531 1%	0	31,578 11%	31,578 (gov. cont. 0%)	
Bring alternative PSs into state system	208,067 81%	0	0	166,975 67%	208,067 71%	166,975 59%	375,042 (gov. cont. 55%)	
<b>Total</b>	<b>255,673</b>	<b>31,572</b>	<b>37,200</b>	<b>251,068</b>	<b>292,873</b>	<b>282,640</b>	<b>575,512</b> (gov. cont. 51%)	

Expanding the coverage of pre-school classes is covered mostly by the state, although roughly one third of the funding is provided by UNICEF and Catalytic Fund money from the first FTI grant, which is allocated even into 2014. The MoES funds much of the related training through the Kyrgyz Academy of Education (KAE) and the government fully covers the costs of maintaining the existing pre-schools through 2014. UNICEF plans to continue to fund on-going amendments to the pre-school law and, with the Aga Khan foundation, will cover all the costs of expanding coverage through alternative models of ECD provision such as CbKs (community-based kindergartens). The state will also put resources (just over half the total contribution required) into integrating the alternative pre-school organisations more fully into the system of state provision. The state covers only just over half of the financing for this programme over three years of the first APED.

Funding for expanding pre-school coverage from external sources would increase very dramatically if the GPE-3 funding is secured. If this money were then to be made available in 2014, it would have a significant impact on the activities and resources available for the APED 2012-14. Ultimately, of course, it is essential to secure on-going state funding to ensure the longer-term sustainability of efforts to expand pre-school coverage.

*Table 8: Programme Two: General Education (financial requirements, APED 2012-14)*

Tasks	Current expenses	Investment expenses		Total				Task (and government %)	total
		internal sources	external sources	internal sources	external sources	internal sources	external sources		
Maintenance of the existing schools network	822,341 24.6%	9,621 94.4%	743,690 92.5%	0	1,566,03 137.8%	9,621 2.3%	1,575,652 (gov. 99.4%)	cont.	
Modernisation and a competency-based approach	0	0	11,104 1.4%	320,113 77.1%	11,104 0.3%	320,113 75.3%	331,217 (gov. 3.4%)	cont.	
Increased availability of	0	0	0	1,231	0	1,231	1,231		

learning materials				0.3%		0.3%	(gov. cont. 0%)
Reform of assessment within the system	0	0	48,224 6%	53,941 13%	48,224 1.2%	53,941 12.7%	102, 164 (gov. cont. 47.2%)
Inclusion in special schools and mainstream education	0	0	1,246 0.2%	4,061 1%	1,246 0.03%	4,061 1%	5,307 (gov. cont.23.5%)
Financial and administrative autonomy	2,515,51 175.4%	567 5.6%	0	35,765 8.6%	2,515,51 160.7%	36,332 8.5%	2,551,843 (gov. cont. 98.6%)
Total	3,337,851	10,188	804,264	415,110	4,142,115	425,298	4,567, 413 (gov. cont. 90.7%)

Programme two of the APED 2012-14, general education – Школьное образование (*МОШ-КР*, 2020), referred to in the financial schedules as, “school and out-of-school education” is led primarily by the MoES and over 90 per cent of the funding is provided by government sources. The government funds tasks that require the most funding such as maintaining the existing school network and, “financial and administrative autonomy” which essentially involves the per capita financing system (PCF) which the government wishes to roll out to all *oblasts* during the APED 2012-14, although smaller targeted amounts are provided by the EU, USAID and other donors. Donor agencies put the bulk of their funding into developing the curriculum for a competency-based approach, and education inclusion. Government and external funds are used equally for the reform of education assessment.

Table 9: Programme Two: Monitoring and planning APED 2012-14

Tasks	Current expenses	Investment expenses		Total			
		internal sources	external sources	internal sources	external sources	internal sources	external sources
Preparation to implement funding models based on SWAp		4,718 100%	9,425 43%	0	0	4,718 100%	9,425 43%
Improve decision-making based on monitoring and planning		0	12,500 57%	0	0	0	12,500 57%
Total		4,718	21,925	0	0	4,718	21,925

The EU is leading the preparation of the funding arrangements to implement SWAp, which the government supports by providing one third of the funding required. All support for monitoring and planning is fully funded by UNICEF, 57 per cent of the total support to programme six, although the EU supports work under this task on internal regulations and efforts to integrate decision-making more fully with the monitoring and appraisal system.

### 2.2.2 Progress report card at the end of the Year One

This section of the appraisal report provides a summary of the main tasks (objectives) of the 6 programmes costed-out under the ADEP. The summary provides a rough indication on whether or not the task is on track for completion after the first year of implementation of the ADEP 2012-14 with a tick (✓) or a cross (✗). The organisations responsible for leading on a particular task (lead actors) are listed and the funding sources are listed, where these are as yet unsecured for the plan, this is also indicated by a cross (✗).

Pre-school Education			
Selected key tasks and indicators	On track to target?	Lead actors	Funding Y/✗?
Objective 1. Increased coverage of children of age 5-6 years (including children with special needs) by school			

preparation programme through the existing network of general education institutions			
Equipping classes	✓	MoF	GoK, WB, FTI
Training teachers	✓	MoES	GoK, WB UNICEF, FTI
Performance assessment for each employee	✗	MoES	GoK, UNICEF
Changing law to accommodate shift-based PSEOs	✓	MoES	GoK, UNICEF
<b>Objective 2. Maintaining the existing network of state pre-school educational organisations (PSEO)</b>			
Implementing state standards	✓	MoES, LSG	GoK
In-service teacher training	✓	KAE	GoK
<b>Objective 3. Expansion of variable PSEOs</b>			
Regulatory framework and new models	✓	MoES	GoK, UNICEF, AKF
Training of personnel for implementing PSEOs of a new type	✓	MoES	GoK, UNICEF, AKF
Information campaign	✓	MoES	GoK, UNICEF, AKF
<b>Objective 4. Extension of the network of state preschool educational organisations</b>			
Fitting out new PSEOs (10 new kindergartens?)	✓	MoES	GoK, LSGs
Transfer of alternative viable PSEOs to state funding	✓	MoES	GoK

The strong tradition in collaborative work in the early childhood area that was initiated primarily by UNICEF and the AKF has continued within the framework of the APED. UNICEF and the AKF have seen the state take responsibility for paying teachers in their community-based kindergartens (CbKs), and amendments to the Pre-school law were made to ensure that pre-school teachers are paid on the same scale as school teachers. Refinements to the plan saw the removal of a commitment to building 10 new state kindergartens (under *Objective 4*) and its reformulation as, "fitting out new PSEOs, which appears to be on track, as is the transfer of alternative models (CbKs) to state funding". Local governments (LSGs) are centrally involved in maintaining state standards in kindergartens at state level and in-service teaching is provided by the Kyrgyz Academy of Education (KAE). The only task that does not appear to be on track after the first year is the performance assessment of each employee in the state pre-school system.

School Education			
Selected key tasks and indicators	On track to target?	Lead actors	Funding Y/*?
<b>Objective 1. Maintenance of the network in accordance with standards</b>			
Develop complete inventory of schools	✓	MoES, LSG	GoK, EU
Normative document for PCF	✓	MoES, LSG	GoK
Maintenance of school infrastructure	✓	MoES, LSG	GoK, EU
ICT in 100 innovative schools	✗	MoES, LSG	✗
<b>Objective 2. Modernisation of education content taking into account the competence approach</b>			
Developing a new outcomes-based curriculum	✓	MoES, GIZ	SFK, EU, GIZ, USAID, GoK
Develop new subject curricula for grades 5-9	✓	MoES, GIZ	SFK, EU, GIZ, USAID, GoK
Introduce new subject curricula in grades 5-9 in 2011/2 year	✓	MoES, KAE	GoK, EU
Developing new test for grades 5-9	✓	MoES, GIZ	SFK, EU, GIZ
Pilot schools/equipping schools	✓	MoES, USAID, UNICEF	GoK, USAID, UNICEF, EU
Conduct career guidance activities	✓	MoES, GIZ	GIZ
Preparing teachers	✓	GIZ, KAE,	GoK, EU, GIZ
Develop curricula and profile levels for grades 10-11	✓	MoES, KAE	GoK, EU
Identification of 8 pilot schools	✓	MoES, UNICEF	UNICEF
Development of tests for natural subjects	✓	MoES, GIZ	MoES, GIZ
<b>Objective 3. Increased availability of methodic sets (MS) for grades 5-11 students to 70% by 2015</b>			

Expanding school library collections	✘	MoES, WB	GoK, WB
Reprinting and supplying textbooks	✘	MoES	GoK, WB
<b>Objective 4. The introduction of new methods of diagnosis and control over the educational process results at the level of student, class and school as a basis for quality result-oriented education</b>			
Developing teachers' standards	✘	MoES, KAE, WB, READ	GoK, WB, RF
Implementing a grade 9 exam	✓	MoES, KAE, READ, WB	GoK, WB, RF
Piloting a grade 11 exam	✓	MoES, KAE, READ, WB	GoK, WB, RF
<b>Objective 5. Provide conditions for inclusive education for children with special needs on the basis of general education and special schools</b>			
Action plan for inclusion in mainstream	✓	MoES	EU
Training of schoolteachers for education and special care	✓	MoES, KAE	GoK
Refurbishing and equipping schools for access	✓	MoES	GoK
<b>Objective 6. Transition of educational institutions to the principles of financial and administrative autonomy</b>			
Expanding PCF to all regions	✓	MoES, MoF, LSG	EU, GoK, WB, USAID
Preparing new systems and management	✓	KAE, MoES	GoK,
Ensuring transparency and controlling corruption	✓	MoES, LSG	GoK

In relation to *Objective 1*, UNICEF's Education Programme supported the MoES to develop a database of all schools in Kyrgyzstan. By the end of 2012, 2001 schools out of 2204 had entered their basic data with the help of district education M&E focal points, who were trained in the summer of 2012. Private and other types of schools are not yet included, but the MoES is working to get the data on those schools entered. The database is web-based, simple to use and can be integrated with any other database using the same school ID code. UNICEF's Disaster Risk Reduction Programme conducted an assessment of all schools and preschools in the country to determine their safety in terms of seismology and structure. This data is also to be included in the database; 2 oblasts are currently being entered, and the intention is to complete this work by the end of March 2013. This work will provide a complete picture of schools in Kyrgyzstan.

The establishment of 100 innovative schools, which are conceived of as hub schools rather than elite schools, has not proceed in 2012. This money was removed from the budget to make up for deficits elsewhere. The money for textbooks which the state was meant to provide under *Objective 3* was also sequestered from the 2012 budget in November due to the deficit. The World Bank was able step in to provide the finance.

The modernisation (модернизация) of the education system involves the reworking of the curriculum to reflect a competency-based approach. Assisted by the Soros Foundation - Kyrgyzstan (SFK) the government has developed and in 2009 approved the new National Curriculum Framework and ADB's Second Education Project (2006-2012) has supported the development of the new subject curricula for all 11 grades. The curricula for grades 1-4 was approved by MOES in 2010, and launched in grade 1 in school year 2011/12. The subject curriculum for grades 5-11 is being piloted, and under APED 2012-14 is planned to be approved by 2014.

The curriculum reform involves the development of a new outcome/ competency-based curriculum for *Grades 1-11* as well as a new learning assessment system. Teachers, parents, CSOs, university and teacher training institute staff have been actively engaged the curriculum development process. The government has plans to develop profiled curricula for grades 10-11, which would allow stronger work orientation in upper grades. These are

envisaged under *Objective 2* under the ADEP 2012-14, which appears to be on track. SFK, ADB and the World Bank are committed to support the curriculum reform further.

The supplying of school libraries has had a slow start and although indications are that it is picking up, this task does not appear to be on track. Library collections refer to learning and reference material that is provided in addition to the core textbooks. There is still a 40 per cent textbook shortage in the country, even though the World Bank stepped in to help with the printing when the government funding did not materialise. This is now recognised to be an urgent priority. UNICEF, with funding from the Russian Federation (RF) started negotiations with the MoES about the printing of learning materials (textbooks, workbooks and teacher guides) for Russian language learning for all *Grades 3* pupils. A call for bids will be announced in early January 2013.

The new assessment methods envisaged under *Objective 4*, appears to be basically on track. There is active involvement from the Russia Education Aid for Development (READ) Trust Fund programme, a collaboration between the Russian Government of Russia and the World Bank who are working closely with the MoES and the Kyrgyz Academy of Education (KAE). It does not appear that the work on teachers' standards is as far as it was intended in 2012.

In relation to inclusion of children with disability in the education mainstream, and despite the lack of clarity in the language of the EDS 2020 and the misgivings outlined earlier in this appraisal, the Government of Kyrgyzstan recently endorsed an Optimisation Plan, which addresses the needs of children in residential institutions including those with special needs and stipulates the provision of alternative services including mainstream schools. This is a welcome development and it indicates that the commitment to achieving education inclusion in the country may be deeper than the language in the EDS 2020 indicates.

Progress was also made in relation to training for teachers involved in special care – Eurasia Foundation for Central Asia (EFCA), with funding from the Soros Fund in Kyrgyzstan, is implementing a small scale but very promising initiative that involves the opening of rehabilitation and school preparation centres within mainstream schools for children with non-severe disabilities from the ages of 5-8, which serve as transit points for adapting to and entering mainstreams schools.

The transition to per capita financing (PCF), with related reforms addressed under *Objective 6*, has been the centre-piece of structural and financial reforms in Kyrgyzstan for several years, it is intended that this will be extended to all regions through the first APED and this work appears to be on track.

Primary Vocational Education			
Selected key tasks and indicators	On track to target?	Lead actors	Funding Y/*?
<b>Objective 1. Strengthening and modernisation of primary vocational education schools (PVSs)</b>			
Modern equipment and furniture, urban and rural	✘	AVTE	DPs, PS, EU
Rehabilitation for disabled access	✓	AVTE	DPs, PS
<b>Objective 2. Improving the quality of training and care, ensure compliance of training to the labour market needs</b>			
Development of a TVET framework	✘	AVTE	GoK
Training packs for competency-based standards	✓	AVTE	GoK, EU

Independent system of accreditation, certification	✓	GIZ, AVTE, SPs	GoK, GIZ, SP
ICT and learning aids	✘	AVTE	GoK, SPs
Promoting interethnic tolerance and understanding	✘	AVTE	GoK
<b>Objective 3. Improving management and financing of educational institutions</b>			
Capacity building of staff	✘	AVTE	GoK, SPs
Introducing Per Capita Financing PCF	✓	AVTE	GoK, SPs, EU
Develop a M&E system	✓	AVTE	GoK, SPs, EU
<b>Objective 4. Ensuring access to vocational education and training</b>			
Development of programmes for children with disabilities	✘	AVTE	GoK, DPs
Programmes for incarcerated youth	✓	AVTE	GoK, DPs
Gender equality in VET	✓	AVTE	GoK, DPs
Conditions for lifelong learning/ career guidance	✘	AVTE	GoK, DPs
<b>Objective 5. Providing conditions for strengthening the role of social partnership in VET</b>			
Normative partnership for social partnerships	✘	AVTE	GoK
Establish national council for professional skills, NCPSP	✓	AVTE	GoK
Build capacity of AVTE as agency of NCPSP	✓	AVTE	GoK
<b>Secondary Vocational Education</b>			
<b>Selected key tasks and indicators</b>	<b>On track to target?</b>	<b>Lead actors</b>	<b>Funding Y/✘?</b>
<b>Objective 1. Changes in the structure of secondary vocational education based on analysis of country priorities and region's economic strategies.</b>			
Develop synergies with employers for training and jobs	✘	MoES	GoK
Develop states competency-based state standards	✓	MoES, KAE	GIZ
Detailed required minimum costings	✓	MoES, VEIs	GoK, VEIs
<b>Objective 2. Involving employers in the formation of the qualifying characteristics and evaluation process of graduate's skills, improve the quality of human resource capacity of VEIs teachers</b>			
Include employers in state evaluation system	✘	MoES, SPs, VEIs	GoK, VEIs, EU
Reform quality assurance system	✓	MoES	GIZ
Develop a regulatory framework	✓	MoES, VEIs	VEIs, GoK
<b>Objective 3. Informing the population about the system of vocational education in the republic aimed at promotion of the image of secondary vocational education.</b>			
Establish marketing, career and job centres in VEIs	✘	VEIs	VEIs
Publicity campaign in media	✓	VEIs	VEIs
Create an information network for with VEIs	✓	VEIs	GIZ

The reforms envisaged for primary and secondary vocational education system involve a comparatively small sum of money even though the system only caters for roughly 29,000 students annually registered in primary vocational education, 70 per cent of which are enrolled in state funded programmes (EDS 2020). Nevertheless it includes a number of active and experienced new partners, both internal and external. The key external partner involved is GIZ, although there is some involvement from the EU on PCF which will also be implemented in the vocational sector and other Social Partners (SPs) linked to business and industry. A different range of local actors are involved in leading the work along with the MoES, these include the Agency for Vocational and Technical Education (AVTE) for primary vocational education and the Vocational Education Institutions (VEIs) for secondary vocational education.

<b>Adult Information Education</b>			
<b>Selected key tasks and indicators</b>	<b>On track to target?</b>	<b>Lead actors</b>	<b>Funding Y/✘?</b>
<b>Objective 1. Increased coverage of basic education of people with no education or who dropped out of school before the regulatory terms</b>			
Regulatory framework for part-time study	✘	MoES, LSGs, UNESCO	GoK

Update curricula and training for part-time	✓	KAE, MoES, UNESCO	GoK
<b>Objective 2. Contribute to the adaptation of the economically active population to the rapidly changing Labour market demands</b>			
Develop and amend existing framework for lifelong learning	✘	MoES, VEIs	VEIs, GoK
Study of regional needs and VEI capacity	✓	HEI	HEI
Validate and enable additional professional training	✓	LGS, VEI, HEI	LGS, VEI, HEI
The reforms for adult education involve establishing a regulatory framework and for part-time study and developing the curricula, the lead actors include UNESCO, local government and the Kyrgyz Academy of Education. Validation will be overseen by higher education institutions (HEIs), which should support quality and, in theory, allow for the transferability of qualifications at comparable levels of study. The frameworks for part-time study and life-long learning are not yet developed but the other tasks envisaged for the programme appear to be on track after the first year. <b>Managing, Monitoring and Planning</b>			
<b>Selected key tasks and indicators</b>	<b>On track to target?</b>	<b>Lead actors</b>	<b>Funding Y/✘?</b>
<b>Objective. 1 Preparation of the education sector to implement funding models based on sector-wide approach (SWAp)</b>			
Develop transition programme for funding on the basis of SWAp	✓	MoES, MoF, EUEAS	EU
Create advisory councils for transparency and delivery	✓	MoES, LSGs	GoK
Improve accounting and auditing systems	✓	MoES, MoF	GoK, EU
Legislation to enable private education	✘	MoEs	GoK
<b>Objective 2. Improve the system of decision-making in the education sector based on the monitoring and strategic planning</b>			
Develop MoES internal systems, procedures, capacity	✓	MoES, EU	MoES, EU
Develop software, indicators, data bank and train staff	✓	MoES, UNICEF	GoK, UNICEF
Develop educational portal for range of users	✓	MoES, UNICEF	GoK, UNICEF, EU
Develop concept for EMIS plus indicators and software	✓	MoES, UNICEF	GoK, UNICEF, EU
Accomplish annual internal assessment of ADEP	✓	MoES, UNICEF	GoK, UNICEF
Draft of second three-year plan	✘	MoES, UNICEF	GoK, UNICEF, EU

The programme for reforming management, monitoring and planning is key within the APED 2012-14 as it needs to support all the other programmes. Both the EU and UNICEF are closely engaged with the MoES and the MoF as the departments work out their internal relationships relating to the financing of education and how it is managed. The EU is focusing primarily on the preparation for SWAp for which it has prepared a related set of indications that are laid out in a joint MOU between the donor partners and the government (DPs-GoK, 2013), which is due to be signed in early 2013.

<b>Higher Professional Education</b>			
<b>Selected key tasks and indicators</b>	<b>On track to target?</b>	<b>Lead actors</b>	<b>Funding Y/✘?</b>
<b>Objective 1. Changes in the structure of higher education training based on analysis of country priorities and economic regions strategies.</b>			
Grant-based admission system based on market needs	✘	MoES	GoK
Increase # of HEIs with shared HEI/employer admission	✓	MoES, HEIs	GoK
Analysis of data linking graduation and employment	✓	HEIs	HEIs
<b>Objective 2. The transition to the two-tier structure of higher education.</b>			
New regulatory framework in line with two-tier system	✘	MoES	GoK
Train HR in HEIs based on two-tier structure	✓	MoES, HEIs	GoK
Develop standards taking into account new school curriculum	✓	MoES, HEIs	GoK
<b>Objective 3. Optimisation of the regulatory framework of quality assurance of higher education.</b>			
Regulatory framework for licensing, accreditation, certification	✘	MoES, HEIs	GoK, HEIs
Reform quality assurance in line with international standards	✓	MoES	GoK
Calculate minimum cost per student and reform financing	✓	MoES	GoK

Regulatory framework for cooperation with foreign universities	✘	MoES	GoK
Regulatory framework for special funds to develop science	✘	HEIs	GoK
<b>Task 4. Creation of conditions for the development of HEI teacher training system</b>			
Contracts with employers for on-the-job training	✘	MoES, HEIs, SPs	HEIs
Regulatory framework for funds for teacher training	✓	MoES, HEIs	HEIs, GoK
Regulatory framework for teaching staff & quality	✓	MoES, HEIs	GoK

Higher professional education is not costed out for the APED 2012-14. The summary information does not indicate a significant involvement from external sources and the lead actor is also the MoES. It is included here in the interests of providing a complete overview.

It must be concluded that the progress made in year one is nothing short of remarkable. The APED 2012-14 is a complex and multifaceted plan, it requires a vast amount of collaboration from donors and a very serious commitment from the MoES. While this assessment on the progress made on the tasks in the plan has relied on reported knowledge and did not include independent verification, the reports from various partners were very consistent. Progress was also everywhere underplayed, as if everyone expected there to be strong performance on tasks and did not think it particularly important to mention.

This strong performance so early on in the first action plan for the EDS 2020, is a very positive indicator for its future success.

## Part Three

### 3.1 Overall Conclusions

This appraisal makes three sets of conclusions in relation to the EDS 2020 and the APED 2012-14: those relating to the consultation process around the strategy and its first action plan; those relating to the substance of the strategy and its action plan; those relating to the capacity of the Government of Kyrgyzstan, specifically the Ministry of Education and Science to lead the strategy and implement the plan.

#### 3.1.1 The consultation process and collaboration around reform

- 1 The openness to active collaboration with donors and international agencies has been a consistent feature of the Government of Kyrgyzstan for more than a decade. This has remained constant through three changes of government over the same period and through times of considerable internal turmoil. The process around adopting the National Concept for Education and the EDS 2020 that followed, and particularly the extensive coordination with donors through the APED 2012-14, all confirm the Government of Kyrgyzstan to be a reliable partner in education reform.
- 2 Aid effectiveness in the country is in line with the Paris Agreement and DAC: it meets the basic requirements for ownership, managing for results and mutual accountability. However, donor partners accept that work on alignment and harmonisation should be continued. The process around setting up the SWAp and the signing of the joint MOU in early 2013 on cooperation between the Government of Kyrgyzstan and donor partners will serve to strengthen the Paris Agreement principle on alignment and harmonisation.

- 3 The Government of Kyrgyzstan, particularly the past three Ministers of Education and officials from the MoES have a tradition of formal consultations within the country that have sought to inform teachers, local government, education practitioners, other government departments, NGOs and international donors of plans for policy change. Some of these consultations are presented below in *Table 10*.

*Table 10: Consultation with Stakeholders*

Name of event	Audience	Presenter	Date
Second meeting of the coordinating committee: Review of the revised text of the 2020 Education Development Strategy of the Kyrgyz Republic.	Gov. officials	Ed. Minister Musaev	Sept 2008
Project Final collegium for 2009: Concerning the project for the Education Development Strategy of the Kyrgyz Republic for 2011-2020.	Education stakeholders ±200	Ed. Minister Musaev & Marchenko	Nov 2009
Presentation to the Minister of Labour, Works and Migration	Minister of Labour	Ed. Minister Musaev	Dec 2009
Official ministerial meeting on the Education Development Strategy	Gov. officials and donors	Ed. Minister Musaev	May 2010
August Education Consultation: The Education Development Strategy of the Kyrgyz Republic for 2012-2020: How to continue the strategic directions for 2009-2011	Teachers	Ed. Minister Sadykov & Marchenko	Aug 2010
Open Round Table: The Education Development Strategy for 2012-2020; priorities and tasks.	Gov. officials and donors	Ed. Minister Sadykov & Marchenko	Jan 2011
Final Collegium for 2010: Presentations of the Minister of Education and Science; discussions of the EDS 2020	Education stakeholders (±200)	Ed. Minister Sadykov	Feb 2011
National Conference: The Education Development Strategy till 2020 and the Medium-term Plan for 2012-2014	General stakeholders	Ed. Minister Sadykov & Marchenko	June 2011
Presentation to the Deputy Prime Minister	Deputy Pr. Minister	Ed. Minister Sadykov	Nov 2011
National Forum: The Education Development Strategy for 2012-2020	General stakeholders	Ed. Minister Sadykov & Marchenko	Feb 2012
Consultation on the question of: The Education Development Strategy of the Kyrgyz Republic for 2012-2020:	Gov ministers	Ed. Minister Sadykov	Mar 2012
Protocol for the consultation with the Prime Minister of the Kyrgystan Republic Babanova on the Development Strategy of the Kyrgyz Republic for 2012-2020:	Prime Minister	Ed. Minister Sadykov	May 2012
National Conference on Education Development Strategy 2020 and Medium Term Programme for Education development in Kyrgyz Republic 2012-2014	Government, Social Partner Organisations, NGOs, school administrators	Ed. Minister Sadykov	July 2011
Parliamentary Hearings	Parliamentary committee & stakeholders	Ed. Minister Sadykov	Dec 2012

Source: MoES Records

- 4 These consultations and particularly the process around the EDS 2020 and APED 2012-14 show that the Government of Kyrgyzstan, particularly the Ministry of Education has full ownership of the reform process in the country. The close involvement of various donors and their leadership in aspects of the workplan do not detract from the

leadership by the government of broader reform process, rather, they demonstrate confidence and an acknowledgement of the capacity deficits that need to be addressed.

- 5 Civil Society Organisations, and in particular the teachers' trade union, the TUESW and organisations such as the Movement of Young Persons with Disability, are showing signs of growing strength in the country and a more determined activism around education inclusion and quality. These potential of these organisations to contribute more significantly to leading ideas for reform and improving effectiveness and quality in implementing reforms is not sufficiently recognised by government or the donor partners in Kyrgyzstan. Thus, even while genuine efforts are made to consult the public, reforms are mostly implemented from the top down and effectively discussion around reform priorities remains at the top.

### 3.1.2 The substance of the strategy the action plan

- 6 The Education Development Strategy 2020 and the Action Plan for Education Development 2012-14 reflect an effort to understand and respond to the country's education needs. As the education sector had suffered from a lack of investment and attention for a significant period, this resulted in a wide range of urgent needs. The strategy responds with a range of complex programmes that recognise the interconnectedness of the various sub-sectors and the systemic nature of the solutions that are required.
- 7 In addition to addressing the wide range of needs, the strategy also provides focus on the most urgent priorities. These include the recognition of expanding programmes for young children in order to improve equity and lay the foundation for quality and improved average learning outcomes; reworking the curriculum to make it competency-based and better attuned to the job market; strengthening teacher professionalism; and achieving inclusive education. In all of these areas effective management, including financial management and planning are understood to be essential.
- 8 The results of PISA and subsequent discussions confirmed the importance of continued investment in education to improve education quality which in turn undergirds national growth. The PISA study also confirmed the importance of teachers in achieving quality education, and emphasised that strengthening teacher professionalism and working conditions is in the best interest of the whole country. This enabled a more receptive response to the teachers' strikes of 2010 and has helped the country do a U-turn to halt the decay of the teaching profession as more young professionals are joining the profession since the salaries were raised.
- 9 Important issues that were inadequately captured in the EDS 2020, such as the importance of child-centered methodologies and that education inclusion means inclusion in the mainstream, are being addressed adequately through the APED 2012-14. While the improved nature of the actions in the plan suggests there may simply have been problem of expression in the strategy, it is important to formulate clearly articulated positions on such important issues in the key policy documents.
- 10 Over twice the number of children may be out-of-school than the official government figures capture (66,418 in 2009) and a considerably higher amount are vulnerable and at

risk of dropping out or performing poorly. Over 40 per cent of children from certain vulnerable groups, such as children with a disability or children from the Lyuli minority are out-of-school. Others, such as street children, children without documents, children of migrants and those affected by conflict are at great risk of being excluded from education.

- 11 The EDS 2020 and the APED 2012-14 are synergistic with the reconfigured GPE priorities but are not an exact fit. This does not cast into doubt the relevance or integrity of the national education priorities expressed in these plans, rather, it raises questions about the pertinence of the new GPE priorities in all national contexts. Girl's education is not the major issue in Kyrgyzstan, they perform better in school and while more of them drop out before the end of school, this is only by a small percentage. Teacher effectiveness and expanding sources for financing education reform are the areas where there is an exact fit with GPE priorities.

### 3.1.3 Implementing the plan

- 12 Most significantly, the progress after year one of a complex plan is highly commendable. There is progress on virtually all of the tasks associated with the six programmes in the APED 2012-14. This is a very positive sign for achieving the objectives of the EDS 2020 and maintaining the momentum of education reform in Kyrgyzstan. It is a testimony to the strong collaboration and level of cohesion there is among development partners around reform priorities and it confirms that the wide range of reforms envisaged and the priorities identified are likely to be the ones that matter. It is very important to give the Government of Kyrgyzstan and its development partners credit for their success so far.
- 13 The success of the EDS 2020, and the ability to finance, ultimately rests on a scenario for steady growth and political stability. The government has demonstrated its willingness to maintain education expenditures but currently is only able to do so by taking on significantly more debt. The financial factors represent the highest risk to the successful implementation of the EDS 2020. The strength of the relationships with international donors, particularly as a more secure commitments from donors stand to be corralled to support the SWAp through 2020, is thus a vital safeguard for the strategy. In the APED 2012-14, the FTI Grant is the main funding source for the expansion of the school-readiness programme; neither the EDS 2020 nor the APED 2012-14 elaborate what the state policy will be if donor funds are not available or after donor funds cease.
- 14 The role of teachers has been mentioned in relation to achieving quality and enabling leadership in the reform process that is more aware of realities in the classroom and in schools. It must also be stressed that teachers are the key partners in implementing all aspects of the envisaged reforms. Their involvement needs to be more deliberate and more urgently and systematically sought. Local Civil Society Organisations should not be overlooked in their potential for contributing to successful implementation as well as thought leadership.
- 15 There is a clear understanding that capacities need to be built urgently in education administration within the MoES. This is also true at a local government level as they will be responsible for channeling the budget to schools and providing other forms of support as well as within the academic institutions such as KAE that provide training for

teachers and support for materials development. The capacities required cover the spectrum of human resources, equipment needs, protocols and systems, communications and financial resources. All of these will require investment over a sustained period.

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<sup>1</sup> The First EFA-FTI Catalytic Fund Grant was for \$9 million for 2007-2008; the Second EFA-FTI Catalytic Fund Grant was for \$6 million for the period from March 24<sup>th</sup> – December 31<sup>st</sup> 2012.

ii

<sup>1</sup> Each of the five GPE objectives is discussed briefly in the Conclusions Section in relation to *Table 6*.

iii

initiative of UNESCO and UNICEF- UIS

<sup>1</sup> The Global Out-of-School Children Initiative (OOSCI) is a joint