

Project Name Peru-Rural Education and Teacher (@)...
Development Project

Region Latin America and Caribbean Region

Sector Early Childhood Development; Primary
Education; Secondary Education

Project ID PEPE55232

Borrower(s) GOVERNMENT OF PERU
Implementing Agency

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Environment Category C

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1. Country and Sector Background

Low Quality of Rural Primary Education Thirty-five percent of Peru's population lives in rural areas, characterized by poverty, geographic dispersion and inaccessibility, and cultural diversity. Ninety percent of the rural population lives in clusters of less than 500 people; 60 percent are poor (with 37 percent below the "food only" poverty line), and a third speak one of Peru's 42 indigenous languages. Social indicators for these populations are also much below those for urban populations: rural women average only 3.7 years of education as compared to 8.3 for urban women and the infant mortality rate is 58 in rural, compared with 32 urban, areas (Ref. 1 and 2, See Annex 4). Although Peru has done an impressive job over the last two decades in achieving universal access to primary schooling, average schooling attainment and student learning are sharply lower in rural areas than urban areas. While gross enrollment rates are similar for rural areas, net enrollment rates in rural primary schools are 65 as compared to 71 urban schools. A 1996 national learning assessment found that only 38.5% of rural school children mastered at least 9 out of 14 basic competencies, compared with 63.5% of urban school children (3). Underlying reasons for this disparity in school performance include: grossly lower time on task (rural schools only function an estimated 200-250 hours per year, compared with the nationally mandated 900 hours); inadequate learning materials; low teacher quality and motivation; teachers' inability to deliver bilingual education to indigenous children and lack of training in multigrade teaching more generally; poor adaptation of the school to the local community and the agricultural calendar; and deficient school supervision and support (4). Low effective hours of instruction. About 90% of rural primary schools are small multigrade schools in isolated communities with harsh physical and

environmental conditions which make it difficult to attract well-prepared teachers. Rural schools are generally the point of entry for new teachers into the education system, suffer high turnover, and tend to remain with the least effective teachers. Teacher housing is rudimentary, if it exists at all, and teachers often leave their schools for distant towns on the weekends, running the risk of not arriving back on time for class, or having to leave before the end of the school week, because of extremely limited transportation. At a minimum, teachers must travel to the provincial capital once a month to pickup their paychecks and needed supplies for the school, forcing them to leave classrooms unattended at least several days a month. These factors, combined with student absenteeism linked to climatic conditions and families' need for children's labor all contribute to very low effective hours of instruction in rural areas. Ill-adapted curriculum and teaching methods. Although Peru has made strong efforts to ensure that the primary curriculum is relevant to children in rural areas, teachers are not trained in multi-grade teaching methods, and students lack the self-paced instructional materials that are essential for effective learning in multi-grade schools. The centralized teacher deployment system fails to ensure that teachers can speak the local language and deliver bilingual education in the early grades, another demonstrated strategy for improving rural education quality. Drop out rates in rural areas are 11.4 percent, far higher than 4.8 percent found in urban areas. An estimated 63 percent of Quechua-speaking children, are over-aged, compared to 50 percent of all children. Deficient school supervision and support. Communications and access problems make contact between rural schools, intermediate education offices, and the Ministry of Education sporadic to non-existent. In an assessment carried out in 2001 rural schools reported less than one supervision visit per year. In the past, two attempts to develop school networks to address the above-mentioned problems have failed. However, a more recent effort to establish school-to-school teacher networks (GFIA's) for experience sharing and collective work on common pedagogical problems appears to be having some positive results. Some innovative small-scale programs have piloted alternative models for assuring better school support and supervision in rural areas, notably the Ministry of Education/Fe y Alegria partnership for school supervision in the Quispicanchis Province. But no satisfactory approach has yet been mainstreamed. Low pre-school and initial education coverage in rural areas. Exposure to pre-school can boost primary school readiness and subsequent learning and attainment, especially among economically disadvantaged and indigenous children, such as those found in rural Peru. Despite the fact that 1 year of pre-school education is mandatory in Peru, only 56% of rural 3-5 year olds have access to pre-schooling, compared with 67% of urban children. Programs to promote early childhood stimulation, or initial education, for 0-4 year olds, through non-formal childcare and parent training, also have been demonstrated to be effective in promoting early brain development and avoiding malnutrition, stunting, and other problems among low-income and indigenous children, which can help equalize their future school success and life chances. Although some high quality NGO-run programs of this type exist in Peru, coverage is very limited. The Government has not yet developed an overall strategy for mainstreaming pre-school access in rural areas or supporting the delivery of non-formal initial education programs to target populations. Low secondary school coverage in rural areas. Secondary education in rural areas faces major challenges of both coverage and quality. Net secondary

enrollment rates are 28 percent in rural schools as compared to 57 percent in urban schools. Because there are very few secondary schools in rural areas, many families' only option is to send their children to urban centers for schooling, which creates direct costs (lodging and travel) as well as opportunity costs, from the loss of children's informal labor. Girls, especially, suffer from this. However, Peru's extremely low population density and poor roads and transportation in most rural areas makes expansion of secondary schooling using traditional face-to-face instructional models prohibitively expensive. Where secondary schools do exist, quality is usually lower than in urban schools, for many of the same reasons as observed at the primary level. Poor teacher quality and motivation. The formal level of qualifications of Peru's teaching force is relatively high: some 67.3% of teachers hold tertiary education degrees. Pre-service teacher training in Peru is also a relatively long 5 year program. However, the average quality of Peru's teachers is considered relatively low (compared with elsewhere in Latin America), for four key reasons. Unregulated and low quality pre-service preparation. There are no accreditation standards for Peru's 350 teacher training institutes and the majority of them are generally acknowledged to be of extremely low quality. Entry requirements are low, the curriculum is highly theoretical, with little grounding in classroom practice (no courses to prepare students are for multigrade teaching, for example) and students have no systematic opportunities for internships in schools as student teachers, which is an essential part of training in most OECD countries. Only 7% of the faculty in teacher training institutes have any graduate training and only 18% hold undergraduate-level degrees in any content areas (mathematics, physics, history, language) besides education. Low standards for entry into the profession. There are no formal standards for teachers in Peru or systematic certification/recertification processes. Recruitment examinations were introduced in 1998, but these assess teachers' conceptual knowledge only and not pedagogical ability, methodological skills, interpersonal and team skills or community orientation. Since the 18,000 teacher training graduates currently being produced annually are well in excess of the Ministry's new hiring requirements (roughly 2,000 net new teachers per year are needed), there exists considerable scope for the Ministry to elevate teacher standards, by introducing new teacher certification and recertification procedures. Low pay and incentives. The average teacher salary in Peru is approximately 1.1 times GDP per capita, which is relatively low for Latin America, even after adjustment for average hours of work, which are lower for teachers than in other professions. The salary scale is also quite compressed, with average pay in the highest teacher category only 1.4 times that of the starting pay level, compared with a good practice ratio of at least 5:1. There are no salary adjustments or other incentives for teaching in rural areas or other hardship posts, which results in a high share of schools in rural and low-income urban areas operating with teacher shortages, even though the system-wide student:teacher ratio is a relatively low 26:1 at the primary level, which suggests that the overall quantity of teachers is adequate. Poor teacher deployment and supervision. Teacher deployment is highly centralized and, although some 30% of teachers have a mother tongue that is not Spanish, there has been no policy to date of deploying teachers geographically in line with their language skills, nor are there any salary incentives for bilingual teaching. Teachers, especially in rural areas, receive little or no performance evaluation or support. Visits from

the local USE are few and far between and career development plans and in-service training opportunities are limited. De facto, teachers face neither positive incentives for good performance nor the threat of sanctions for poor performance. Inefficient administration and low accountability for school performance. The central Ministry of Education (MED) shares the responsibility for nationwide provision of educational services (from preschool to tertiary non-university education) with 24 Regional Education Directorates (DRE), which vary considerably in terms of geographic size, school system development, and student populations, ranging from Lima, with over 2.1 million students, to Madre de Dios, with less than 29,000 students. Each DRE is headed by a director (named by the Director of the CTARs). Between the DREs and the school level are sub-regional offices of two types 81 Educational Service Units (USEs), which are administrative oversight offices with budgetary authority, and 187 Education Development Areas (ADEs), which are supposed to focus on educational supervision and support, and which do not have budgetary authority. There are three clear issues with the current system. First, analysts concur in labeling the Ministry of Education as heavily centralized and inefficient. Although a high-level commission is currently tasked with developing a national decentralization plan by end-2002 that will affect all sectors of Government, little is known about the possible outlines of this reform at present. The current reality is that top-down initiatives emanate regularly from MED with little concern for prioritization, avoiding duplication, and the difficulties of administering cascading requests for information or action at the regional, sub-regional and school levels. At the Directorate level, there is little autonomy and accountability for the performance of the schools in their region. Data on school performance and student learning are not organized and monitored at the DRE level, and DREs are neither rewarded nor sanctioned for their progress in improving educational indicators over time. Although some DREs are apparently more innovative and effective than others (5) the Ministry appears to lack instruments for disseminating effective approaches or intervening where failure is persistent. Second, there are clear problems at the USE/ADE level, which is marked by confusing geographic and functional demarcation of responsibilities, inadequate staffing and equipment for their missions, and low value added to schools. The Ministry recognizes that, particularly in rural settings, the USEs and ADEs have generally been ineffective in reaching the schools, and often characterized by a bureaucratic and punitive orientation, rather than seeing themselves as a source of support. The third and most important issue is that, system-wide, there is a lack of focus on the school level. Peru is one of the few countries in Latin America that has not yet put in place a standardized system of student assessment to track learning outcomes. Although sample-based assessments were undertaken in 1996 and 1998, they were not standardized so as to permit comparison of the results over time. A new assessment is being administered in November 2001, but again on a sample basis. As a consequence, schools receive no regular information about how their student learning performance - or other education indicators (graduation, repetition, dropout rates) -- compares to that of other schools serving similar student populations. School development planning is not undertaken systematically, plans where they exist are not resourced, and there are no instruments for holding schools accountable for implementing improvements. Schools have no budgetary autonomy, and cannot even undertake minor purchases or repairs. Parents are invited to serve on parent-teacher bodies (APFAs), but these

have no formal role in school personnel or other decisions and many operate only perfunctorily. In short, in contrast to the growing number of Latin American countries which are strengthening budgetary and decision-making, and accountability for results at the school level while simultaneously strengthening key normative and assessment functions at the Ministry (or system) level, the education system in Peru remains quite centralized and the focus on school level results is weak.

Government Strategy:The Government of Peru has developed a strategy for the education sector based on three strategic objectives (1): (a) achieve quality of education for all, (b) strengthen public schools, ensuring autonomy, democracy and quality of learning, and (c) drastically improve the quality in the performance and working conditions of teachers. MOE has prioritized the following areas for immediate action:

Establish a new social pact within the framework of the National Agreement on Education. As a result of the National Consultation on Education, MOE has drafted a proposed National Agreement on Education which is in the consultation process. This Agreement calls for the creation of the National Education Council with wide participation of civil society, including political parties. In the medium term, this Agreement is expected to result in new Education and Teachers Laws.

A more democratic and accountable education management system. This action calls for the reorganization of the MOE regional offices in order to reduce bureaucracy, focus the system on the pedagogical issues and making it accountable not only for management of the budget but also for the overall performance.

Expand and improve the quality of the education services in priority areas. The targeted areas include (i) expanding, strengthening and improving the quality of initial (pre-school) education, including universal coverage of 5-year olds, significant increase in coverage of 4-year olds and strengthening early childhood development programs for younger children, (ii) strengthening rural education and expanding intercultural bilingual education , (iii) secondary education reform, (iv) including the use of information and communication technologies in schools and to expand access to secondary education in rural areas ("Plan Huascarán"), and (v) reconstruction of schools in the areas affected by the July, 2001 earthquake in the south of Peru.

Launch the reform process of the teacher career, through strengthening the dialogue with the teachers unions, redesigning the career, implementing a continuous teacher training system, designing a new salary policy and implementing a new accreditation system of teacher training institutions.

The above actions arise in large measure on the results of the National Consultation on Education, which was carried out during the first semester of 2001 with the objective of collecting inputs from the public opinion on which to build a sustainable and long-lasting agreement on education. A 24-member National Commission was created to lead the process and over 300,000 individuals throughout the country expressed their opinions, demands and expectations on six major topics: tomorrow's skills, school learning, extra-school learning, school management, education priorities and financing, and education information and evaluation. Based on 25 regional and 99 institutional reports, the National Education Commission wrote a Proposal for a National Agreement on Education. The end-result ("Las Voces del PaÚs") is a detailed, well-organized and very illuminating document, divided into six sections corresponding to the above-mentioned topics. There is massive agreement on the skills needed for modernity, system decentralization, definition of quality standards and indicators, school supervision and evaluation, shared responsibility and vigilance, and transparency.

2. Objectives

The Project objectives would be to improve basic education access and quality in rural areas, improve rural teacher quality and motivation, and strengthen education management.

3. Rationale for Bank's Involvement

The World Bank has extensive experience in supporting projects on rural education, with strong multigrade, bilingual and intercultural components. Also, the Bank has wide experience in decentralization programs where local communities play an important role. The experience gained in Central America, Brazil and Colombia in these areas will be instrumental in assisting MOE's efforts in developing quality education in rural areas. The Bank has already been working with GOP extensively in the early implementation of the proposed reforms. The project is tied to the Programmatic Social Reform Loans (PSRL I and II) which is promoting the development of the new teacher career structure and the piloting of rural teacher pilot program, as well as the first steps toward decentralization and community participation.

4. Description

a. Increasing access This component is thoroughly oriented toward increasing access to education at preschool, initial and secondary levels in selected rural areas. In association with the other two components it will improve quality as well. Initial and Preschool Education. The sub-component will expand initial education to two rural children groups: (a) non-formal home-centered education to approximately XXX 0-through-3-year old children, an increase of XX percent over the 2001 low-attention situation; and (b) formal preschool education to XX 4 and 5-year old children, an XX percent increase over the current attention level. In the first, non-formal approach, children will be educated along with their parents and siblings within a family and community framework. Services will be delivered by trained community educators (animadoras) through three main activities: (i) family cluster meetings: young children with mothers, fathers, brothers/sisters, aunts, uncles, grandparents etc.; (ii) house visits to follow up and support previous learning steps and agreements, and foster new developments as fitting; and (iii) partnership seeking with other social agents so as to maximize early childhood developments (ECD) factors. All the activities have to do with either starting or strengthening a family-centered ECD culture based on simply organized and easily digestible elements of education, health, nutrition, security, parenthood, love and togetherness, cognitive and psycho-social development, play and recreation, family values, micro-environment cleanliness and protection. Meeting places will be primary and secondary schools, churches, health and other community centers. In-house institutional support will derive from the Non-formal Initial Education Program - PRONOEI and its cumulative experience with ECD, and from the planned school networks (see c below). Expected results are: children's balanced development, timely entry to formal schooling, readiness to benefit from primary and further schooling, and overall (present and future) parents' preparation to become better educators and community members. Investments will be made in community educators training and compensation, production and printing of family guides, production and broadcasting of radio messages, improving existing PRONOEI centers, team transportation, supervision, evaluation and follow-up activities. For the formal initial education, the Project will: (i) expand coverage

wherever a justifiable number (15-20) of children exists in the neighborhood of a primary school; and (ii) improve quality of existing and selected preschool groups. Investment will be necessary to add new spaces to some primary schools, and to finance the corresponding teacher training, furniture, materials, and physical rehabilitation activities.

Secondary Education In selected rural areas where the traditional education system is made difficult for geographical remoteness or harsh access, the Project will develop distance secondary education programs through the application of cost-effective information and communication technologies. Over the 2002-2011 period XXX students will be included in the innovative strategy, or a XX percent coverage increase as compared to the 2002 rates. The model under consideration will: (a) use satellite-linked bi-directional channels to facilitate real-time communication between the students and a tutor located at the emitting station in approximately 200 schools (in the first phase); (b) engage a local tutor in charge of fostering group interaction and individual learning; and (c) provide specially designed instructional materials (printed handbooks, videos, computer, CD-ROM) to further elucidate curriculum elements and suit individual interests. The gradual expansion of the program will depend on the positive assessment of a pilot experience. The program will adopt the same set of competencies officially established for this education level, aiming at promoting meaningful, autonomous and long-lasting students', tutors' and community learning processes and outcomes. Investments will be made to: (i) acquire new information and communication hardware and software (on a complementary basis to the investment already made by the GOP); (ii) train and support local tutors; (iii) develop or purchase printed, audio and visual materials; (iv) maintenance and operation of the system; and (iv) evaluation of the pilot.

b. Improving Quality This component goes beyond access and is committed to enhancing quality education as a condition for permanence at school and achievement in learning. Education quality promotion will start by overhauling the teacher training system, and will also include other tested quality factors such as curriculum development, instructional materials, school-initiated projects, evaluation mechanisms, and rehabilitated physical infrastructure as follows:

Continuing Teacher Training System The required quality will hinge first and foremost upon teaching and learning quality. This sub-component will seek to upgrade teachers' educational and academic profile through four main activities: (a) the design and proposal of the continuing training system for teachers and other key human resources involved in the educational process; (b) the design and proposal of the pre-service teacher training curriculum and institutional framework; (c) a higher-level training of teacher trainers; and (d) rural education teacher training. This sub-component will support: (i) the discussion, development and proposal of the desired Continuing Teacher Training System as a unified concept and operational and logistic framework. The purpose is to counteract the damaging effects of the current theoretical and practical disconnection between pre-service (formación inicial) and in-service (capacitación) training efforts; (ii) the design of the curriculum and institutional profile for the pre-service training. This is the first definition expected after the establishment of the system umbrella concept. There is enough room for innovation concerning this structural and organizational setting, and participatory mechanisms will be set up to produce the most adequate proposal; (iii) the specialized training of the trainers currently teaching at the teacher training institutions. Their

participation in the program will depend on some institutional conditions, including the accreditation status of the institution; and (iv) the training of the rural teachers along the newly defined curricular and institutional lines. Investments will be made to finance meetings, consulting and materials needed to reach the desired proposals for the continuing teacher training umbrella concept, and the pre-service curriculum and institutional setting; design of the program and actual training of XX trainers; and training of XX rural teachers.

Curriculum Adjustment and Instructional MaterialsThe cultural, socioeconomic and physical specificity of the rural environment asks for a flexible and adjustable institutional framework at school. This sub-component responds to such needs by: (a) supporting the design of a self-paced and culturally attuned primary education to replace the rigidity of the current grades; and (b) the provision of teaching and learning materials both in Spanish and the native languages for the use of all children from initial to grade 11.

The omnipresent allegiance to grade sequence at school has been one of the most often mentioned causes for rural education inadequacy and failure. It shows a bureaucratic discrimination against a young population characterized by poverty, isolation, illness, and seasonal injunctions. This sub-component will: (i) replace the year-defined grade system with wider and more flexible learning cycles. Instead of chronological criteria and annual promotion, what will prevail is learning achievement. Children can go and come as needed to rejoin their achievement level or group, without being forced to repeat an entire school year; and (ii) provision of instructional materials in Spanish and the vernacular languages to support teaching and learning activities. Investments will be made in consulting, printing and dissemination of the cycle-based curriculum, and purchasing or developing of instructional materials.

Education Innovation Projects Teaching and learning success has been largely associated with local initiative and empowerment. The expression of school and community identity and uniqueness in the immensely diverse Peruvian society could well counterbalance the all-embracing administrative trends. This sub-component will enhance quality by financing Education Innovation Projects (PIEs) initiated by schools and accredited teacher training institutes. Further discussion is needed to spell out: (a) PIEs objectives; (b) participation criteria and steps; (c) amount available for each project; (d) selection procedures; (e) resource transfer strategy; and (f) evaluation and closure. Investment will be made to finance 200 selected PIEs in three years and their adequate management.

Quality and Performance EvaluationThe operation of a reliable student assessment mechanism is an indispensable part of any education reform strategy that focuses on the school. Peru counts on technical capacity and has conducted (in 1996 and 1998) two sample-based national assessments, but these were not calibrated so as to produce comparable results. Besides, census-based assessment are fundamental, if the goal is to improve the consistency and reliability of teachers' classroom assessment of student progress. This sub-component will help the existing student performance evaluation team design and implement: (a) a twofold evaluation system including sample-based assessment complemented by census-based assessments, at least every 2 years; and (b) a useful and reliable mechanism for disseminating the assessment results among schools and other key stakeholders. Investment is needed to support consulting services, development of a regular testing program (as opposed to one-shot test), test application and analysis, timely result dissemination and related printing.

Rehabilitation of Physical Infrastructure This sub-component would include investment on physical infrastructure, furniture and other equipment as identified in the local network strategic plans. Priority would be given to schools with poorer infrastructure located in the poorer districts. The responsible construction agents are still to be defined. However, it is expected that responsibility will be at the local level. c.

Strengthening Education Management Management becomes a key factor for the success of equity and quality inputs. This component will develop or support managerial mechanisms or instruments (school autonomy, school networks, sub-central MOE offices, community participation), conduct policy-oriented studies and finance project management as follows:

Institutional Strengthening This sub-component will focus on: (a) increasing school autonomy by (i) implanting, training and monitoring the school council in XX rural schools; and (ii) designing, disseminating, implementing and monitoring the Institutional Development Plan - PDI in XXX rural schools as a participatory planning, monitoring and evaluation instrument; (b) implementing XXX rural school networks, training their participants and evaluating their activities; (c) redefining and assisting the sub-central offices in order to prepare them for the newly assigned role of technical mediator between schools, networks and the overall system; and (d) fostering community participation by: (i) developing the concept of "education community" involving a variety of stakeholders (and not only parents and teachers) interested in school processes and results; (ii) incorporating the varied support deriving from community into school councils and other meaningful school expressions and projects. Investments will be made in material and handbook development and printing, consulting, training, dissemination, equipment for sub-central offices, and evaluation. Policy-oriented Research Studies The definition of several Project elements, especially within an Adjustable Program Loan - APL framework, still depend on the results of carefully conducted studies. At least eight studies (to be selected and designed) will be carried out to pave the ground for policy or administrative purposes. Two studies have been suggested as necessary: (a) One has to do with the structure and development of teaching career. Its topics include recruitment, selection, remuneration, incentives, promotion, and professional development; and (b) a second one to prepare a proposal for implementation of new accreditation standards for teacher training institutes designed to ensure higher-level teacher competence. Project Management Project management and more explicitly the operation of the Project Coordination Unit - PCU will be financed by the Project. A Project Implementation Handbook will be designed and agreed upon to specify processes, outcomes, conditions, times and deadlines ruling the entire implementation period.

5. Financing

Total (US\$m)

BORROWER \$20.00

IBRD \$30.00

IDA

Total Project Cost \$150.00

6. Implementation

MOE will be primarily responsible for the execution of the project. At the national level, the Vice-Ministry for Pedagogical Management will take responsibility for implementation oversight. The Ministry's Project Coordination Unit (PCU), formerly responsible for implementation of the

Primary Education Quality Project and currently responsible for the two IDB Projects, will take responsibility for project implementation, monitoring and evaluation. The PCU will continue to operate under the current operational structure, that is, the PCU will carry out procurement and financial management of Project funds upon the request of Ministry Directorates and Regional offices under the yearly Project Implementation Plan. At the regional and local levels (i) the Regional Offices of Education (DREs) will be responsible for local implementation oversight (ii) local schools and networks will be responsible for diagnosing needs, preparing local strategic plans and implementation, and, (iii) NGOs and training institutions under contract with MOE will take on the role of training and providing external supervision of the project activities. With respect to infrastructure, the final decision has not been made on possible executing agencies. The following are being considered: FONCODES (the Peruvian Social Investment Fund), local governments, and the school networks. A final decision will be made during the pre-appraisal mission.

7. Sustainability

Project objectives reflect GOP priorities and the National Consultation on Education. The Government has committed itself to raising the share of the education budget incrementally during the next five years.

8. Lessons learned from past operations in the country/sector

In equity and quality terms, rural education has been the most defying segment of the entire system. Some projects (EDURURAL in Northeast Brazil, Colombia's Escuela Nueva, and El Salvador's EDUCO) have been exemplary on how to address the specific needs of rural education in a diversity of approaches. The Project will devote special attention to basic education inclusion and quality issues in remote areas of the Peruvian Andes and the Amazon. Bilingual education has proven to be a cost-effective means to reduce repetition rates, drop out and failures in indigenous populations, as observed in a number of World Bank projects including in Mexico, Guatemala and Bolivia. The current bilingual education program in Peru is also showing positive results as shown in a recent evaluation. Teacher training has been object of renewed and increasing interest as the most important quality factor for school-based education improvement. Projects like the Brazilian FUNDESCOLA and Paraná, the Mexican PAREB and the Uruguayan MECAEP emphasized teacher training in a way that proved to be decisive. The proposed project will help design a carefully conceived "continuous teacher training system" with immediate application to teacher training in rural areas. School autonomy has been the focus of well-known and positive education reforms in Minas Gerais (Brazil), Chile, El Salvador and Nicaragua as a meaningful strategy to boost local ownership and community participation. The proposed project will support school autonomy mainly by the development of the "education community" concept, strengthening of the school councils and the development and implementation of the school-centered Institutional Development Plan - PDI. The concept of school network as an instrument for micro-regional school association and planning has been implemented in Ecuador and in Ceará (Brazil) with the Regional Education Development Centers - CREDE. In the project preparation period, Peruvian professionals benefited from Ecuadorian assistance and visited the Ceará model. Both cases inspired the design of the proposed school network structure, which seeks to promote closer-to-school management and pedagogical initiatives in rural

areas. Provision of secondary education through distance learning with support from information and communications technology has been carried out in a number of countries, including Mexico and Colombia. Results are quite positive showing positive impacts both in coverage and quality that is comparable or, sometimes, better than traditional secondary education. The Peruvian MECEP Project was implemented by the Ministry under PCU coordination. The Project PCU staff was only dedicated to the administration of the Project funds. This project implementation system ensures process ownership and sustainability. However, it also creates lags in implementation mainly because there is great need for intra-institutional coordination. The first lesson learned is that it is better to sacrifice timeliness for ownership. Even though it would be more practical and timely to have a separate group of people executing project activities, it is best to involve the whole Ministry, keeping the responsibility under the directorships. The proposed project would also be implemented by the Ministry while intra-institutional coordination issues would be addressed through the participating directorates. A small-size and qualified PCU was able enough to manage, particularly for the last two years, the Primary Education Quality Improvement Project - MECEP (1996-2001) and carry it out to successful and timely completion. Among other lessons learned, the continuity of committed staff was key to successful implementation. The proposed project will maintain the same PCU structure and most of the same--and now more skilled and equally motivated--professionals. Loose inter-sector coordination in the Ministry stemming from either the structural setting, frequent personnel changes in the Ministry or partisan discrepancies posed a constant threat to adequate and converging Project implementation. To offset the potentially disintegrating situation, the Bank set out to invite all the participating sectors to sit down around the broader Project objectives, and pay frequent visits to a variety of counterparts including the newcomers. For the upcoming project, MOE structure will not significantly change, but the democratic process has renovated the organizational atmosphere and the Bank meetings and visits to participating authorities are expected to payoff as before. Frequent contact with other ongoing Peruvian projects in the social areas helped place this education project in a broader political and administrative framework, which has added synergy to project-supported components. The Bank needs to pay more attention to inter-institutional processes as part of project design and supervision. The new project will benefit from the same interaction with other Bank or otherwise social projects in the country. The availability of a well-conducted sector work means a source of information and a comparative point for data validation. This role was superbly played by "Peruvian Education at a Crossroads : Challenges and Opportunities for the 21st Century" (Washington, DC: The World Bank, 2001) in the whole preparation process.

9. Program of Targeted Intervention (PTI) Y

10. Environment Aspects (including any public consultation)

Issues : The environmental impact of the project is expected to be insignificant since only rehabilitation of schools will be financed. MOE is not projecting any growth in primary schools and any infrastructure for the preschool classrooms or secondary program would be linked to existing schools.

11. Contact Point:

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Note: This is information on an evolving project. Certain components may not be necessarily included in the final project.

This PID was processed by the InfoShop during the week ending April 5, 2002.