

# PROJECT INFORMATION DOCUMENT (PID) CONCEPT STAGE

Report No.: PIDC23623

<b>Project Name</b>	China: Guangdong Compulsory Education Project (P154621)
<b>Region</b>	EAST ASIA AND PACIFIC
<b>Country</b>	China
<b>Sector(s)</b>	Primary education (70%), Secondary education (30%)
<b>Theme(s)</b>	Education for all (100%)
<b>Lending Instrument</b>	Investment Project Financing
<b>Project ID</b>	P154621
<b>Borrower(s)</b>	PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA
<b>Implementing Agency</b>	Guangdong Department of Education
<b>Environmental Category</b>	B-Partial Assessment
<b>Date PID Prepared/ Updated</b>	05-May-2016
<b>Date PID Approved/ Disclosed</b>	06-May-2016
<b>Estimated Date of Appraisal Completion</b>	
<b>Estimated Date of Board Approval</b>	12-Sep-2016
<b>Concept Review Decision</b>	Track I - The review did authorize the preparation to continue

## I. Introduction and Context

### Country Context

China's economic development in the past 30 years has raised the well-being of the population but not equally everywhere. Income gaps between rural and urban areas are one manifestation of the ensuing disparity. Urban-rural disparity is also apparent in school management, available education resources, and the quality of teachers and teaching. More specifically, a dearth of well-trained teachers, in combination with fewer educational resources (such as ICT facilities in classrooms) and poor school management lead to lower educational attainment in rural areas and, perhaps most importantly, poorer learning outcomes.

The country's public education system, which is based on nine years of compulsory education, has undergone sustained reforms over the last two decades. This has resulted in substantial improvements in enrollment and completion rates at the primary and junior secondary levels. Since the implementation of Free Compulsory Education (FCE) in 2006, the central and provincial governments play a role in the provision of compulsory education via earmarked funds. However,

ultimately county governments are responsible for ensuring that all children receive quality compulsory education.

Despite sustained reforms, key challenges remain to be addressed. These include narrowing the urban-rural gap in education resources available to schools, the quality of teachers and teaching practices as well as school management practices. Such gaps can disproportionately affect disadvantaged groups including left-behind children and children with disabilities.

Some of these challenges arise in part from the decentralized system for financing and management of basic education in China. The system is anchored at the county level and based on the residency registration (hukou) of students. In the case of provinces with large migrant populations, receiving governments and local public school systems are responsible for providing these children with compulsory education. Available fiscal revenue, education budget allocations, and the size of the population of migrant children can vary widely from region to region thus undermining equality of quality and quantity even further. In practice, these characteristics vary not only across levels of education and across provinces but also between urban and rural areas within the same province.

As China strives to become a modern, harmonious and creative society, a key priority will be ensuring equality of both quantity and quality of education. This will require that students and teachers have the requisite educational resources and that school systems have adequate financing and enhanced management practices to meet evolving needs. These are critical steps needed to ensure equitable access to high quality education for all children.

### **Sectoral and Institutional Context**

Guangdong province typifies the successes and challenges of the education sector in China more broadly. As a driver of China's growth, Guangdong has been on the leading edge of several reform efforts. A timeline of national and provincial reforms, presented in Figure 1, captures some of the dimensions on which the province has made active progress. These range from articulation of goals for compulsory education, to assessing whether schools are in line with national standards to emphasizing the role of ICT in compulsory education.

One core challenge faced by Guangdong in compulsory education is variation in per capita expenditure within the province. While the per student subsidy for compulsory education has been rising in Guangdong (Table 1), Figure 2 underscores the fact that per capita spending in Guangdong (RMB 6390) is still lower than the average of the country (RMB 6918). The counties that will be the focus of this project have substantially lower per capita spending (RMB 1691).

The situation is further exacerbated when one considers that approximately 1 million migrant workers leave their children behind in rural areas. These children are thus left without a key aspect of support most other children are able to rely on during their schooling – their parents. A recent initiative undertaken by UNICEF in Sichuan province used video diaries to document that the homelives of left-behind children provided them with less support for education than those of children residing with their parents. Thus schools in rural areas – already struggling with low resources – also have to provide a missing element of care to left-behind children.

In an effort to address some of these challenges the provincial government has undertaken a number of steps. These include (i) increased allocation of teaching resources for rural areas; (ii) strengthened training options for rural teachers; (iii) increased transfer payments from provincial

coffers to underdeveloped regions; (iv) increased resources to rehabilitate dilapidated housing for students and teachers; (v) construction of safe schools; (vi) introduction of Ban Tong (classroom-to-classroom connection) ? an ICT-based approach to supporting teachers.

In particular, the two-phase Guangdong Education Create Strong Schools Program (Chuang Qiang) and Modernization Program (GECQMP) has been under implementation since 2010. Its main goal is to create the conditions to ensure universal access to quality education between 2010 and 2020. Acknowledging the challenges in education described above the each phase of the GECQMP has distinct objectives.

Under the first phase the objective is to improve access to quality education. The government plan is designed to ensure equal access to educational resources for all children in both urban and rural areas. At the elementary and junior school levels, this includes the priority provision of ICT for all classes, laboratories, and libraries for all schools, renovation and rebuilding of classrooms meeting government standards, expansion of play grounds, provision of multi-function activity rooms for children with minor disabilities, social support to left behind children, affordable housing for teachers in rural areas. In addition this includes, mandatory training and re-training of teachers and principals, and an enriched curriculum reflecting a more competency-based, results-oriented approach to teaching, learning and integrated life skills.

Under the second phase the objective is to modernize the education system. The government program is to further improve the quality of education and to transform the province into a modern education hub for the southern part of China to build a ?people-centered, equitable, and efficient education system.?

To achieve these objectives by 2020, the GD government has issued a series of policy directives which provide guidance to education authorities at municipal, city, county, and township levels. The target set up by the GD government is to have 85% of schools meeting the Chuang Qiang standards and 10% of schools meeting the modernization standards by the end of 2016. All schools should meet the Chuang Qiang standards by 2020 and 85% of schools should meet the Modernization standards by the end of 2020.

Progress towards these targets has not been even across th e province. Over the past four years, most of the schools in urban areas have been certified as having met the Chuang Qiang standards. Some schools in Guangzhou city have even been selected as outstanding model schools ? typifying the new ?people-centered, equitable, and efficient? education system. However, schools in 16 less developed counties, are lagging behind in achieving the Chuang Qiang objectives and are at risk of not fully meeting the 85% target by the end of 2016.

The project will focus on 16 counties which are: Chaoyang, Wengyuan, Wuhua, Haifeng, Lufeng, Suixi, Lianjiang, Leizhou, Wuchuan, Dianbai, Huazhou, Chaoan, Huilai, Puning, Jiexi and Luoding.

These counties face the following, common set of challenges:

- (i) They lack sufficient resources for providing quality education.
- (ii) Some schools in these counties fail to meet existing standards.
- (iii) There is persistent use of traditional teaching concepts and methods.
- (iv) Teacher quality is low.
- (v) Special groups such as children with disabilities and left-behind children have insufficient

access to education.

(vi) The provision of high-quality education is undermined by unsound school management practices.

The proposed Project is being designed to provide technical and financial support to help these sixteen counties overcome these challenges, so that they can catch up with the rest of province in achieving the goals of each phase of the Chuang Qiang and Modernization program.

Project activities will have relevance beyond these target counties. As part of the project, the province seeks to pilot alternative approaches and carry out studies on several initiatives that will be considered in the modernization phase of their program. Therefore while the project is concentrated in particular counties, the approaches that will be tested in the context of the project will have the potential to be used province-wide.

### **Relationship to CAS**

At its core, this project promotes "inclusive development" - one of the pillars of the China CPS for FY13-FY16. In order for China's continued development, the CPS notes the need for enhancing access to high-quality public services such as education - particularly in underdeveloped areas.

In addition, the project will support the Bank's twin goals. Continued inequality in access to high-quality public services such as education will undermine growth rates. As noted in the China 2030 report - a collaboration between the Bank and China's Development Research Center of the State Council (DRC) - expanding opportunities for all will be one of the strategic directions the country needs to pursue as it seeks to transition from middle- to high-income status.

Lastly, the CPS notes that the Bank Group's most valuable contribution in China is the role it plays in innovation, knowledge sharing and cooperation. This project promises to provide a variety of opportunities to develop analytical products, explore public-private sector partnerships at the provincial level and pilot the effectiveness of innovative new approaches.

## **II. Proposed Development Objective(s)**

### **Proposed Development Objective(s) (From PCN)**

The project development objective is to improve access to educational resources and quality of teaching in selected public schools located in 16 counties of Guangdong.

### **Key Results (From PCN)**

The key results indicators for this project are:

- a. Percent of classrooms with ICT packages installed
- b. Number of online courses developed
- c. Percent of teachers using online courses
- d. Number of teachers trained
- e. The quality of teachers and their teaching practices which will be measured using classroom-based observations. While a specific measure of quality under the project has not yet been identified, the following instruments are currently in use and will help inform the final indicator selection. In each case the measure below has been documented through international empirical research to promote improved student learning. Which of these instruments is most relevant in the context of the 16 counties will be determined through piloting in Guangdong:
  - i. An assessment of how teachers spend their time in the classroom – time-on-task. One

approach to measuring time-on-task is the Stallings method which has been applied in a variety of settings across the world.

- ii. An assessment of teacher competence in the following four domains: planning and preparation, the classroom environment, instruction and professional responsibilities. Referred to as the Danielson framework these four domains are at the core of a teacher's responsibility.
- iii. An assessment of teacher quality using the suite of Service Delivery Indicators. These combine aspects of the assessments above with a test of teacher subject knowledge.

### III. Preliminary Description

#### Concept Description

The proposed project seeks to improve access to educational resources and quality of teaching. It will focus on selected public schools in 16 counties that face a number of challenges in delivery high quality compulsory education to their students. These challenges run the gamut from schools not meeting existing standards, to teachers needing additional training, to ensuring specific activities are available for left-behind children and children with disabilities.

In order to address the challenges these counties face, the project will focus on the following components:

- a. Component 1: Improve educational resources for teachers and students
- b. Component 2: Assess teaching and learning practices, strengthen training and improve quality of teaching
- c. Component 3: Pilot experimental approaches to improving resources, teaching, teacher deployment and school management
- d. Component 4: Project Management, Capacity Building, and Monitoring and Evaluation

Under component 1, the following activities are envisaged:

- a. Hardware
  - ? Classrooms. Crowded classrooms continue to hamper the delivery of education in schools in parts of the province. Some classrooms will need to be constructed in order to bring schools in compliance with existing standards for class size.

- ? Teacher dormitories. One key incentive provided to teachers in rural areas is the ability to get free/subsidized housing. Teacher dormitories will need to be constructed in some locations where demand for them outstrips supply or where the existing stock of dormitories needs to be replaced.

- ? Mobile laboratories. The government seeks to ensure that all students have access to laboratories. However, it is not always feasible for all locations to have a dedicated, stand-alone laboratory: some locations may have too few students to justify the cost of constructing a laboratory while others may not have a teacher. This activity will lead to the design and deployment of mobile laboratories: buses or vans that house a configurable laboratory. Depending on the equipment loaded into the van at any given time, the lab can be configured to be a physics, chemistry, biology or computer lab and can be moved around among locations that need them.

- b. ICT Equipment and online educational content
  - ? ICT packages for primary and junior secondary schools: Ban Ban Tong. Under the Chuang Qian project, the government has been supplying schools with an ICT package referred to as Ban

Ban Tong ? classroom-to-classroom connection. Under this project schools that have not yet received Ban Ban Tong will receive the package with a view to improving teaching practices.

? ICT packages for teaching stations. Teaching stations are schools that only offer classes up to grade 5. Typically found in remote, rural locations, these schools require a more substantial ICT package. This package is similar but not identical to the Ban Ban Tong package.

? Multi-media and video-conferencing equipment. Video-conference facilities are needed at the county level to facilitate teacher training ? particularly distance training. In addition to allowing face-to-face instruction these facilities will also allow teachers to access online teaching and teacher training materials.

? Teaching materials. The content that will be needed for training and online sharing needs to be developed. This activity will finance the development of these materials.

? Database. A database will be needed to house this online teaching and teacher training material. The database will include self-paced online training courses for teachers as well as online content that they can use in classrooms with their students.

c. Special purpose equipment

? Equipment for children with mild learning disabilities. The government seeks to develop activity rooms in mainstream schools for children with mild learning disabilities (the exact list of disabilities that the project will be able to focus on has not yet been finalized). These rooms would be used to provide specialized care to these children. The project will finance the procurement of the equipment needed for these rooms.

? Equipment for an activity room for left behind children. The project counties are home to a large number of left-behind children. In order to better support their development, the government seeks to provide activity rooms for left-behind children. The project will finance the procurement of the equipment needed for these rooms.

? Equipment for extra-curricular activities. The government seeks to support the over-all development of children. In order to do so children must have opportunities to engage in extra-curricular activities. The project will finance the equipment needed to support such activities.

Under component 2, the following activities are envisaged:

a. Video observation for teacher assessment

? Video-based classroom observation. Teaching practices will be assessed using video-based classroom observations. In particular analysis of these videos will help understand how teachers and students interact with each other and with available ICT for learning and overall development.

? Development of teacher training modules. These videos will be used to develop teacher training modules for continuous professional development (CPD). This approach builds on experiences in Indonesia and Vietnam where teacher CPD was reinforced using video-based classroom observation.

b. Training

? Training for multi-subject teachers. In smaller schools, teachers often have to teach multiple

subjects. However, they have seldom been trained to do so. Under the project a short term program on multi-subject teaching will be developed and delivered for existing teachers.

? Degree programs for multi-subject teachers. Two types of fully-subsidized degree programs are also envisioned for new teachers: (i) a 5 year associate's degree and (ii) a 6 year bachelor's degree.

? Training for special education teachers. Teachers will need to be trained to work with and manage the activity rooms for children with mild learning disabilities. While the children will spend the day attending regular classrooms with the rest of their classmates, these teachers and activity rooms will be available for additional support as needed.

? Training for teachers caring for left-behind children. Teachers who will be assigned to manage the activity room for left-behind children will need training in how to do so.

? Training for regular and backbone teachers. Courses to improve teaching practices with a focus on learning outcomes and overall development will be designed and delivered to both regular and backbone teachers ? teachers who are considered excellent. These courses will be delivered through multiple channels including face-to-face training and online training.

? Training for principals. Principals require training in school management skills to ensure that systems and processes for delivering quality education are efficient. A number of instruments exist to assess strengths and weaknesses of management practices. The project will identify an appropriate instrument for adaptation and use in the context of these 16 counties and use it to prioritize training for principals.

? Courses for students. Students will need to be taught how to employ ICT to support them in achieving better learning outcomes. These courses will ideally be delivered in schools.

c. Studies

? Evidence-based design. Several of the proposed activities under this project will need to be based on a review of existing practices and evidence. These are (i) a study on the standards for training multi-subject teachers; (ii) a study on how to reinforce the missing element of care for left-behind children and (iii) a study on how to design content for continuous professional development using video observation of classrooms.

Under component 3, the following activities are envisaged:

a. Pilots

? Leveraging social donations. In an effort to address the lack of financial resources for education at the county-level, foundations have often been relied on to raise social donations from prominent local and/or expatriate businessmen. The project will pilot the establishment of a standard, transparent management system for such foundations to collect and channel social donations for education.

? Improving children's overall development. A core objective of the government is to produce not only good students but good citizens. This objective focuses on children's overall development. A pilot will be undertaken to test out alternative strategies for improving the overall development of children in compulsory education.

? Providing incentives to teachers to work in rural areas. One persistent bottleneck to quality education in Guangdong is the lack of good teachers willing to teach in rural areas. The provincial government organizes special recruitment fairs each year for teachers in rural areas. This pilot will experiment with ways to strengthen the current incentive system to encourage teachers to work in rural areas. For instance, since 2008, Guangdong province has been refunding tuition fees to university graduates who work as teachers in rural areas. Under the project, the government will test two other approaches to boost teacher incentives to work in rural areas.

(i) An institution-based approach: Schools within the province will be invited to participate in a school-to-school partnership system where educational resources and teachers from better-off schools can be shared with worse-off schools. A typical duration for teacher deployment under this approach would last up to 1 year.

(ii) An individual-based approach: Under this approach the government would advertise a number of incentives for teachers to work in rural areas. It would monitor which ones attract the most candidates. Teacher deployment in this case would range from 3 to 5 years.

? Improving school management practices. Selected schools within the project counties would pilot approaches to streamline systems and processes. One possibility is using an ISO9000 certification approach to improve efficiency. Other approaches will be considered and piloted.

b. Studies

? Evidence-based design. A study reviewing incentives to encourage teacher mobility would be needed to inform the design of the pilots proposed in this component.

Under component 4, the following activities are envisaged:

? Consultants. Technical consultants will be recruited to form a panel of experts. They will supplement the capacity of the PMO and PIUs to:

(i) Carry out research

(ii) Assist in the day-to-day implementation of project activities, including procurement, financial management and safeguards

(iii) Coordinate within and among the relevant government agencies.

(iv) Carry out regular M&E activities

? Capacity Building. The Department of Education including the PMO and PIUs will be provided with:

(i) Office equipment to facilitate communication, coordination, and project management.

(ii) Training on Bank procedures and project management.

(iii) Study tours for project management and for exchange of experiences in modernizing the education system.

? Monitoring and evaluation. M&E activities will need to be coordinated by the PMO following the Results Framework. In particular, to establish the impact of project activities on learning, a sample of students in grades 3 and 4 and in grades 7 and 8 will be tested before and after specific project activities. Appropriate sampling strategies will be followed to be able to demonstrate the causal impact of key interventions if deemed feasible.

For each component, school selection criteria will be developed to ensure that activities are well-targeted to schools that need them the most. These criteria will be objective and draw on administrative data on schools in each country. For instance, in the case of classrooms and teacher



dorms, the project will examine enrollment trends over the last several years to assess whether the school has been growing or shrinking. Eligibility criteria will also be developed on the minimum size of schools that can be feasibly incorporated into the project.

#### IV. Safeguard Policies that might apply

Safeguard Policies Triggered by the Project	Yes	No	TBD
Environmental Assessment OP/BP 4.01	x		
Natural Habitats OP/BP 4.04		x	
Forests OP/BP 4.36		x	
Pest Management OP 4.09		x	
Physical Cultural Resources OP/BP 4.11		x	
Indigenous Peoples OP/BP 4.10		x	
Involuntary Resettlement OP/BP 4.12	x		
Safety of Dams OP/BP 4.37		x	
Projects on International Waterways OP/BP 7.50		x	
Projects in Disputed Areas OP/BP 7.60		x	

#### V. Financing (in USD Million)

Total Project Cost:	300.00	Total Bank Financing:	120.00
Financing Gap:	0.00		
<b>Financing Source</b>			<b>Amount</b>
Borrower			180.00
International Bank for Reconstruction and Development			120.00
Total			300.00

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