

**Strategy Recommendations for  
Handover of the HCEP Pilot Schools to MoEYS and  
Responsible Exit of the Community Support Unit**

**Final Consultancy Report**

**November 2011**

**CARE International in Cambodia**

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## ACRONYMS

BB	Bending Bamboo
BE	Bilingual Education
CDPF	Capacity Development Partnership Fund
CSU	Community Support Unit
CT	Community Teacher
DOE	District Office of Education
ESP	Education Strategic Plan
HCEP II	Highland Children's Education Project, Phase II
HCEP	Highland Community Education Program
LNGO	Local Non-Governmental Organization
MoEYS	Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport
PLK	Paor Lung Khung
PKC	Paor Kei Chong
POE	Provincial Office of Education
RPU	Resource Production Unit
SB	School Board
SBA	School Board Assembly
SIP	School Improvement Plan
SSC	School Support Committee
SST	State School Teacher
ToR	Terms of Reference
TTC	Teacher Training College
TTU	Teacher Training Unit

### Note on Terminology:

The acronym "HCEP" has been used by CARE in two ways:

The Highland Children's Education Project

The Highland Community Education Program

All education initiatives in the Highland Communities Program are now known as the **Highland Community Education Program** with the following acronyms relating to the specific periods mentioned:

HCEP I - for the period 2002 - 2005

HCEP II - for the period 2006 - 2013

## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

CARE has provided direct support to community schools, providing bilingual education, in six indigenous communities for nearly ten years through its Highland Children's Education Project (HCEP). By 2013, CARE is looking to handover management of these schools to Cambodia's Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MoEYS) and to withdraw support provided to indigenous school boards (SBs) through its Community Support Unit (CSU). A consultant was contracted in August 2011 to assess progress against and further develop the strategy for CARE's responsible exit. This final report presents recommendations for CARE's exit strategy, based on research findings and consultation with stakeholders.

A "responsible" CSU exit has been interpreted to mean that after CARE's withdrawal, indigenous SBs will continue to have a sense of ownership over their schools and will continue to play a role in school management, in light of the handover to MoEYS. Among the CSU outcomes to be sustained are SBs with the skills, and recognition and respect from other stakeholders, to play roles in PB budget management, teacher management, portfolio assessment and communication with DOE. These roles, however, are more supportive than what CARE envisaged. The outcomes to be sustained go beyond a list of SB responsibilities; stakeholders prioritize schools staffed with motivated teachers and attended by motivated students.

There are a number of challenges, most identified by stakeholders, associated with sustaining these outcomes after authority is transferred to MoEYS. Less frequent disbursements of community teachers' salaries risk their demotivation and resignation, while insecurity of teachers' jobs could undermine community ownership (*Teacher Staffing and Salaries*). Lack of agreement on and respect for SBs' roles and their exclusion from school budget management risks SB disenfranchisement and demotivation (*School Management*). DOEs' lack of capacity to support bilingual education and discriminatory attitudes toward ethnic minorities could translate to lack of state support to the schools and loss of school board leverage (*Support from Education System*). Lack of availability of teaching and learning materials risks student and teacher demotivation and reduced student attendance levels (*School Resources*). Finally, staffs' interactions with stakeholders limit the transfer of skills to and empowerment of SBs and teachers (*Interactions with Stakeholders*).

These challenges are the basis for 22 strategic objectives, each with a set of recommended activities. Key recommendations include:

- Advocacy for on-time and in-full payment of teacher salaries and school budgets
- Negotiations with MoEYS on processes for community teachers to earn state school teacher qualifications, so they are paid more regularly and have improved job security
- Facilitation of stakeholder agreement on SB roles, and training to support improved SB involvement in school budget planning and monitoring
- Provision of technical support and sensitivity training to DOEs, to build their capacity to support bilingual education schools and their appreciation for cultural differences
- Training, on-going coaching and monitoring of staff interactions with SBs and teachers to ensure stakeholder empowerment

Some objectives are achievable by the exit of CSU, in June 2013, and the official handover of the schools to the MoEYS, in December 2013. However, others require longer-term interventions. The consultant proposes mobilization of a Technical Assistant to support longer-term activities, a better solution than NGO localization. Roadmaps, as well as monitoring frameworks, for strategic objectives and activities, are included.

## **2. INTRODUCTION**

### **2.1 Project Background**

In 2002, CARE established the Highland Children's Education Project (HCEP) to address the educational needs of disadvantaged ethnic minority groups through the establishment of six community schools in the remote highlands of Ratanakiri province. Managed by indigenous school boards and staffed with teachers selected from the communities, the schools deliver a curriculum adapted to the local context, using an innovative model of bilingual education (BE), from grades 1-3. The national curriculum, in the Khmer language, is delivered in grades 4-6, allowing children to complete a primary education.

CARE's HCEP is managed by three operational units: a Teacher Training Unit (TTU), which develops and delivers pre-service and in-service teacher training to community teachers; a Resource Production Unit (RPU), which produces vernacular and Khmer teaching resources with input from elders; and a Community Support Unit (CSU), which builds the capacity of managing school boards.

A project evaluation, in 2006, identified HCEP's ability to vest genuine ownership and control of the schools in the school boards as the single most important factor in the success of the model (CARE, 2006). CSU achieves these ends through capacity-building, including: training, assembly meetings, guidance for student enrollment and portfolio assessment processes, and provision of budgets for school development.

In 2011, twenty-six of the HCEP schools' initial students passed the grade 9 exam and are among some of the first members of their communities to complete a lower secondary education. Furthermore, the success of the community schools has led to upscaling of the BE model by Cambodia's Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MoEYS). The model is being implemented in 30 schools, across three northeastern provinces, in four different languages. Preparations are underway to start implementing bilingual education in two more provinces and in two additional languages. The MoEYS upscaling is funded by UNICEF, with technical assistance provided by CARE, and is guided by *The Guidelines on Implementation of Education for Indigenous Children in Highland Provinces (BE Guidelines)*, which was approved by the Minister of Education in August 2010 (MoEYS, 2010).

After working with the schools for nearly ten years, CARE is now looking to handover the pilot community schools to the MoEYS and exit the CSU in a responsible, sustainable and appropriate way (Appendix B).

### **2.2 Purpose of the Consultancy**

A consultant was hired in August 2011 to assess progress against CSU's existing exit roadmap (Appendix A) and to further define and develop the strategy for CARE's handover of the HCEP schools to the MoEYS and its responsible exit of its support to indigenous community school boards. The expected output was a clear exit strategy with a roadmap and time frame. In addition to the tasks outlined in the ToR (Appendix B), the consultant was asked to document case studies of NGO localization (Messmer, 2011b), to consider alternatives to establishing a local organization for a responsible CSU exit, and to complete a staff capacity assessment focused on skills needed to effectively implement CSU exit activities (sections 6.5.1, 10).

## **2.3 Scope and Methodology**

This final consultancy report recommends a strategy for handing over the HCEP-supported schools to the MoEYS and for responsibly exiting the Community Support Unit. The exit strategy is based on:

1. A desk study of HCEP and CSU documents to assess progress on exit planning and implementation
2. Questionnaire responses from management, individual meetings with HCEP Team Leaders and Community Support Officers and consultation with stakeholders to define CSU outcomes to be sustained
3. Group discussions with the CSU team, to analyze the current roles and levels of independence of school boards
4. Observation of student enrollment preparation at Team Leu, portfolio assessment at Krola and a community consultation meeting at Paor Kei Chong
5. Focus group discussions with school boards and community teachers from six schools; SSTs from four schools; and mothers, fathers and students from four communities as well as individual meetings with the POE Deputy Director, POE Director of Inspection, Borkeo DOE Director, O'Chum DOE Director, Veunsai DOE Deputy Director, and Veunsai DOE Director of Administration to identify potential handover challenges
6. Focus group discussions with the school board and community teachers at Phum Pi, a POE BE replication school
7. A consultation workshop with key stakeholders from MoEYS, POE, DOEs, cluster schools and HCEP-supported schools to consult with them on key issues associated with the handover of the schools
8. Two semi-structured group discussions with the CSU team to assess training needed for implementation of the exit strategy

## **2.4 Limitations**

There are several limitations associated with this exit strategy. Most notably, there is not yet stakeholder agreement on the roles of the school board, which constitute the outcomes to be sustained following CARE's exit (section 3). Although stakeholders have been consulted on school board responsibilities, differences in ideas have yet to be reconciled. Securing stakeholder agreement on school board roles, therefore, is an integral part of this strategy.

Secondly, although MoEYS and POE representatives participated in the consultation workshop to discuss issues associated with the handover of the schools from CARE to MoEYS, some handover challenges require consultation with and commitment from high-level MoEYS officials. It was not feasible to have these discussions before preparation of this exit strategy. Issues that require further discussion are noted in this report.

Lastly, stakeholder consultation was facilitated by CARE staff, many of whom have concerns and strong ideas about the handover of the schools to the MoEYS. Although facilitators were reminded of the importance of extracting stakeholders' suggestions, as opposed to introducing their own, it is possible that community members' ideas were influenced by facilitators. Workshop time constraints also affected the quality of stakeholder input.

## **2.5 Structure of Report**

This report begins with definition of the outcomes to be sustained following CARE's withdrawal from the 6 HCEP-supported schools, followed by an assessment of the current situation. Next, is a discussion of largely stakeholder-identified challenges, which are the

basis for the strategic objectives and recommended activities that comprise this exit strategy. Some recommended strategic outcomes are achievable in the short-term, while others are longer-term interventions. A strategy for implementation of these longer-term interventions is proposed. The final sections of the report detail staff training needs for implementation of the strategy and recommendations for staffing considerations, monitoring and evaluation, as well as communication with stakeholders. The report concludes with a risk assessment on the exit strategy.

### **3. OUTCOMES TO BE SUSTAINED**

CARE has called for a “responsible” CSU exit. Informed by discussions with management, the consultant has taken this to mean that after CARE's withdrawal, indigenous school boards will continue to have a sense of ownership over their schools and will continue to play a role in school management, in light of the handover to the MoEYS. Specifically, after CARE's exit, school boards will have the skills and the recognition and respect from other stakeholders to fulfill the following roles:

- Monitor their schools
- Participate in the collection, planning and monitoring of PB budgets
- Encourage students to enroll in school and assist with student registration
- Monitor student attendance
- Assist the school director to resolve teacher-related problems
- Liaise with community members and parents
- Confidently interface with DOE to withdraw PB funding, solve problems and request/plan special needs/activities
- Participate in portfolio assessment processes

These are more supportive management roles than the roles that CARE originally envisioned for SBs. The redefined roles reflect SBs' desires, as much as what the consultant perceives is feasible based on MoEYS guidelines<sup>1</sup> and consultation with MoEYS, POE and DOEs (see Appendix C for detailed analysis). As noted in section 2.4, these roles have not been agreed by stakeholders; agreement is an important part of this exit strategy (section 6.2.1).

A responsible exit which aims to ensure sustained community ownership requires that voices of community members be reflected in the strategy. From consultation with SBs and other community members, it is clear that beyond having a SB, they also expect the school to be staffed with motivated teachers and attended by motivated students. In fact, when consulted about the priority challenges associated with CARE's exit, more school boards prioritized issues related to teacher salaries (section 5.1.1) and staffing (section 5.1.2) than they did about their own management roles (Appendix D). As a result, this strategy paper focuses both on sustaining the functioning of the schools as well as sustaining management roles of the school board.

### **4. ASSESSMENT OF CURRENT SITUATION**

#### **4.1 Progress Made Toward Integration of the Schools into the MoEYS System**

Several key milestones, toward integration of the HCEP schools into the MoEYS system, have already been achieved.

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<sup>1</sup> Including *BE Guidelines*; MoEYS-defined roles for School Support Committees; and MoEYS-defined roles for communities served by state schools (Appendix C)

#### *4.1.1 Deployment of SSTs*

In 2007, the Ministry deployed the first SSTs to Paor Lung Kung, Paor Kei Chong and Krola schools. Although it has been a challenge to retain SSTs in such remote posts, four of the six schools currently have at least one SST placed in an upper grade level (Appendix E).

#### *4.1.2 Recognition as MoEYS Annex Schools*

The schools were recognized as MoEYS annex schools in 2008. This recognition entitled the schools to Program Budget (PB) funding and Khmer textbooks and also led to their integration into the MoEYS cluster system. As CARE already provides intensive in-service teacher training, the teachers from HCEP schools do not participate in cluster-organized, Thursday technical meetings. However, school representatives (usually the SST) are invited to participate in other cluster forums.

Recognition as annex schools also brought new responsibilities, particularly in terms of reporting to DOE. SSTs, who have been assigned the role of “school director,” generally fulfill these responsibilities, planning for and reporting on PB budgets, student enrollment and performance, etc (section 4.3). At schools where no SST is assigned, the community teacher representative fills this role.

#### *4.1.3 School Land Registration*

The land on which each of the schools is built was registered as MoEYS property in 2009. The land registration has been recognized by commune, district and provincial authorities. Each school has also created a map of their campus in line with MoEYS policy. School boards and CSU were actively involved in this process.

#### *4.1.4 School Board and Community Teacher Structures*

In 2010, school boards and community teachers, separately, elected a “representative” and “deputy representative” to head their teams. This was a move to clarify responsibilities and to assign signature authorities for reports and budget plans. The representatives play coordinating roles for their team and also act as points of contact for CARE and for the community. In schools without SSTs, the community teacher representative is also the point of contact for interactions with the DOE.

### **4.2 School Boards' Perceptions of Their Current Roles**

School boards are responsible for management of their schools. Based on focus group discussions with SBs across all six schools, SBs generally perceive the following as their current roles:

- School monitoring
- Teacher management
- Student attendance monitoring
- School development planning and implementation
- Liaising with community members and parents

They also say that they participate in the following activities, but that they share these responsibilities with teachers:

- Student enrollment
- Portfolio assessment
- Budget management
- Problem resolution

SBs do not associate the following as their current responsibilities:

- Communication with DOE

### **4.3 “School Directors” and Dual Management Structures**

MoEYS policy stipulates that only government representatives may withdraw and handle government funds. Consequently, MoEYS have assigned SSTs as “school directors” for the purpose of receiving and managing the school's PB budgets. POE and DOE also look to “school directors” to assume other responsibilities, including management of teachers and reporting to and interfacing with the DOE and cluster. Where HCEP schools do not have SSTs (Krola, Mais), POE has allowed a community teacher to assume this role.

Where “school directors” are Khmer and have come from outside of the community, it is evident that they have undermined the sense of ownership and management role of the school board. Where there is poor cooperation with the school board, dual management structures have been created. “School directors” are the school's primary interface with DOE, while school board and community teacher representatives are the school's primary interface with CARE. In several cases, too, “school directors” control the school's PB funding, while SBs' only financial resources come from CARE's provision of SIP budgets (support which will be withdrawn as part of CARE's exit).

### **4.4 School Board Motivation**

School boards identify the following factors as their motivation to carry out their roles (Messmer, 2011a):

- Their desire for their children to have a good education
- Their desire to see their community develop
- Their ability to contribute to on-going development of their school (through CARE-provided SIP budgets)
- Frequent visits by and meetings with CARE staff
- Trainings and workshops
- Their sense of responsibility to their community, who elected them, and who respect and listen to them

Consideration of these motivating factors is important in planning for CARE's exit, as continued SB motivation is essential for their on-going involvement in their schools.

### **4.5 School Board - DOE Interaction**

In general, school boards and DOEs have had limited communication to date: only two school boards have met the DOE independently; one has met DOE once, with CARE; and three have never met DOE. CSU has attempted to spur interaction between school boards and DOE by inviting DOE representatives to two School Board Assemblies (SBAs) and by encouraging school boards to submit their SIPs for DOE stamp and signature. In reality, though, it is the community teachers who have taken on the latter.

### **4.6 School Support Provided by CARE**

CARE currently provides material, management, administrative and technical support to HCEP schools. Aside from teacher training and BE teaching resources, which CARE provides to all BE schools, CARE also supplies:

- Students' learning materials (bags, notebooks, pens, etc)<sup>2</sup> (RPU)
- General teaching materials (markers, chalk, paper, tape, plastic folders, etc)<sup>3</sup> (RPU)

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2 CARE does not have budget to support these materials for the 2012 school year. Presumably school boards will use SIP budgets to cover materials for the upcoming year.

3 CARE does not have budget to support these materials for the 2012 school year. Presumably school boards will use SIP (or PB) budgets to cover materials for the upcoming year.

- Support to conduct stocktake at the end of each school year (RPU)<sup>4</sup>
- Community teachers' salaries
- Support for student enrollment and portfolio assessment processes (CSU/TTU)
- Student and teacher attendance lists (CSU)
- Annual budgets for school development (CSU)
- Training, support and guidance for school boards (CSU)
- Sports programs and equipment (CSU)
- Technical support to teachers, through monthly monitoring visits (TTU)

## 5. CHALLENGES ASSOCIATED WITH THE CSU EXIT AND SCHOOL HANDOVER

There are a number of challenges – both external and internal to CARE – associated with handing over the schools to the MoEYS and sustaining the roles of the school board outlined in section 3. Most of the challenges external to CARE are stakeholder-identified, while others are based on gaps between the current situation and the intended outcomes. The challenges are broadly categorized across five categories: (i) teacher staffing and salaries, (ii) school management, (iii) support from the education system, (iv) school resources, and (v) interaction with stakeholders. These challenges are the basis for the strategic objectives and consultant recommendations, which are outlined in section 6.

### 5.1 Teacher Staffing and Salaries

#### 5.1.1 Regular and Fair Teacher Salary Disbursements

Under CARE support, community teachers are paid salaries equivalent to contract teachers; they are paid, in full and on-time, at the end of each month. Although their remuneration levels will remain the same with transfer to the MoEYS payroll, their salary disbursements are likely to be less frequent. It is not yet clear if community teachers will be paid on terms of contract teachers or community BE teachers supported by UNICEF-provided budget. The former are paid once per year; the latter should be paid monthly, but salaries are late, usually disbursed every 3-4 months. The reduced frequency of teachers' salary disbursements and the potential for less-than-full and late disbursements present risks to teacher motivation, attendance, and retainment, as well as school board motivation (Messmer, 2011a). Almost all school boards and teachers (CT and SST) flagged this challenge as high priority.

#### 5.1.2 Job Security of Community Teachers

Differences in staffing practices between CARE and the MoEYS present challenges to the job security of CTs. Job security of teachers is a top priority of school boards and community teachers (Appendix D).

##### 5.1.2.1 Number of Teachers per Class

Some standard-sized classes at HCEP schools are staffed with multiple teachers. Sometimes this has been a strategy for management of large class sizes; however, other times this has been a result of POE's failure to notify CARE of the deployment of new SSTs. Per the *BE Guidelines*, the Ministry will provide one teacher for a grade 1-3 class that has up to 25-40 students. Similarly, for grades 4-6, the Ministry targets one teacher for class sizes up to 45 students (MoEYS, 2010). Per these policies, HCEP schools were over-staffed with seven CTs over the 2010-2011 school year (Appendix E).

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4 In 2011, RPU also supported Ratanakiri POE BE schools for this activity. It has not yet been decided if this support was temporary or if it will be on-going.

### *5.1.2.2 Multi-grade Teachers*

Multi-grade teaching is not practiced in BE classes, in grades 1-3, where different languages are required for different subjects at different times. However, it is a MoEYS strategy to ensure teacher provision in state schools in remote areas (MoEYS, 2010) and is practiced in grades 4-6 of POE-supported BE schools. Policy stipulates that classes comprised of less than 15 students are combined for multi-grade teaching. Priority for these teaching positions is given to SSTs. Although CARE does not support multi-grade classes in HCEP schools, there were eight classes across four schools which met Ministry criteria for combination in the 2010-2011 school year (Appendix E).

### *5.1.2.3 Insecurity of Contract Teachers*

Without qualifications to be recognized as SSTs, CTs, when transferred to Ministry payroll, will have the status of contract teachers. Contract teachers' positions are generally insecure. In 2010, the MoEYS announced that they were phasing out all contract teachers. MoEYS is still working to that end, as evidenced by the POE Deputy Director's concern: "I am concerned about the community teachers [at HCEP schools]. If there are enough SSTs, then community teachers are not needed." However, the POE Deputy Director also recognizes that replacement of the 16 community teachers who are currently placed in grades 4-6 of HCEP schools, could create rifts between communities and POE/DOE, making communities less willing to work with the government post-handover.

## **5.2 School Management**

### *5.2.1 Agreement on School Board Roles*

Stakeholders were consulted about the future roles of school boards – and those of the SSTs who are appointed "school directors" – at the consultation workshop. While there was universal agreement across stakeholders on some roles, including planning and monitoring of PB budget expenditures and announcement of student enrollment, there was less agreement on other roles, including teacher management, student registration, and the level of communication with DOE (section 3). A necessary step in ensuring that the school board roles are recognized and respected is the agreement of school board roles amongst stakeholders.

### *5.2.2 Transparent and Participatory PB Management Systems*

Most school boards and CTs report little evidence of materials purchased with PB funding. In most schools, too, PB budgets are withdrawn and managed by one teacher; school boards are not involved in planning or monitoring spending. There is a need to recognize and respect the school boards' role in PB budget management and to improve control mechanisms to ensure that PB budgets are used to resource the school. School boards and community teachers identified this challenge as high-priority.

### *5.2.3 School Board – DOE Relationships*

School boards should play a role communicating with DOEs for PB budget withdrawal, problem resolution and extraordinary activities. However, until now, school boards and DOEs have had very limited interactions. There is a need to increase school board and DOE interaction as a means of building their working relationship.

### *5.2.4 School Board Understanding of Portfolio Assessment*

Although SBs acknowledge their participation in the portfolio assessment process as one of their roles, school boards at three schools highlighted that portfolio assessment could not continue without CARE, as the school board does not understand how to do it (Messmer,

2011a). Assuming that portfolio assessment continues (section 9), there is a need to ensure that school boards are confident to carry out their roles in this process before the handover of the schools.

### *5.2.5 “School Director” Respect for School Boards*

School boards report that one of their biggest challenges is earning the respect of SSTs, particularly those who come from outside of their communities. As the PKC school board says, “The teacher from outside our community does not respect us.” Similarly, mothers from Team Leu worry, “We’ve noticed that the two SSTs at our school have frequent absences and do not listen to our community.” The school board at Phum Pi, a POE-managed BE replication school, face similar challenges winning the respect of the SST. The MoEYS and POE prioritized the need for “school director” and school board cooperation, which is integral for achieving and sustaining outcomes beyond CARE’s exit.

### *5.2.6 School Board Training*

SBs and CTs alike have identified on-going SB training as an important factor for building SB capacity and sustaining their motivation. A community teacher at Mais shared: “School boards are like burning wood. You can let the wood burn, but at some point, you need to poke it so that it can burn more.” He suggested that 1-2 school board trainings per year is the key to keeping school boards active. Although Mondulkiri and Stung Treng POEs provide SB training two and three times per year, respectively, using UNICEF-supported budget, Ratanakiri POE does not offer SB training.

## **5.3 Support from the Education System**

### *5.3.1 DOE Awareness of BE and BE Technical Capacity*

DOEs’ limited awareness of the formal BE program and their limited technical capacity for its implementation present a risk to the success of the HCEP school handover. A POE representative bluntly admitted that “DOEs do not understand about BE.” It is evident that in some cases, such as O’Chum District, DOE is over-stepped by POE for BE implementation and support to upscaling schools. Nonetheless, POE provides BE training to DOEs, but it is infrequent due to budget limitations. Also, only representatives from districts which have BE upscaling schools are invited to participate in training and meetings. While that includes O’Chum and Borkeo, two of the three districts where HCEP schools operate, it excludes Veunsai district, the location of Team Leu. The Veunsai DOE Deputy Director associates bilingual education with NGO-supported projects and was not aware of the MoEYS’s BE program. Even the Borkeo DOE Director, who did demonstrate an understanding of the Ministry’s BE program, identified a need for BE technical support. Unfortunately, due to confusing workshop invitations, only the Borkeo DOE Director participated in the entire consultation workshop.

### *5.3.2 POE/DOE Monitoring Visits*

Teachers have identified a need to receive on-going technical support through POE/DOE monitoring visits, a role that TTU fills for HCEP-supported schools. School boards have also suggested that POE/DOE visits are not only important for teachers, but also for the general operation of the school and for their own motivation (Messmer, 2011a). According to CARE’s POE counterpart, POE monitoring visits are infrequent at POE-supported BE schools; also, no HCEP-supported schools report recent DOE visits to their school.

### *5.3.3 Discrimination*

Evidence of discriminatory attitudes toward ethnic minorities among government stakeholders pose a risk to the ability of SB members and CTs, to confidently communicate with government. Although some CTs report no problems working with DOE, others’

concerns are fueled by previous negative experiences (Messmer, 2011). These discriminatory attitudes were also apparent in discussions that the consultant had with DOE representatives and SSTs (Messmer, 2011). Community teachers, who until now have had more interactions with DOE than school board members, flagged this challenge as high-priority.

## **5.4 School Resources**

### *5.4.1 Student Learning Materials*

Each year, CARE distributes learning materials – including bags, notebooks, pens, etc – to students at HCEP community schools.<sup>5</sup> School boards, teachers, mothers, fathers and students alike, recognize that the provision of these materials is what enables some children to go to school (Messmer, 2011a). UNICEF's budget to MoEYS for BE replication schools reportedly covers students' supplies; however, the reality is that these materials have not been provided. Though some families will be able to buy school materials for their children, the withdrawal of this support may lead to reduced student enrollment and attendance levels. It may also affect parents' and students' responsiveness to schools boards', which is a motivating factor for schools boards (Messmer, 2011a). School boards and community teachers identified this challenge as high-priority.

### *5.4.2 Financial Resources for Resourcing Schools*

Until now, schools have largely relied on CARE for general teaching resources, including markers, paper, tape, chalk, etc.<sup>6</sup> However, post-handover, PB budgets will be required to resource the school. It is reported that in cases where these budgets do reach the school (section 5.2.2), they come late and in less-than-full amounts.

## **5.5 Interaction with Stakeholders**

Internal to CARE, staff behavior is another challenge that limits the transfer of skills to and empowerment of both school boards and teachers. This perception is based on limited observations of CSU and Bending Bamboo staff at the 2011 portfolio assessment at Krola and a community consultation meeting at PKC (Messmer, 2011a). While the consultant is aware that her presence at these activities may have influenced staff's actions and behavior, specific observations of concern include:

- Ensuring community ownership of the PKC meeting was not a priority, as evidenced by a CSU-prepared agenda and the tendency of staff to step in when activities did not go to plan
- Use of Khmer language, with only some Kreung translation, did not encourage inclusion of all those in attendance at the Krola portfolio assessment
- Staff's leading role at the portfolio assessment did not give opportunities for teachers and school board members to increase their level of involvement. According to an HCEP team leader, staff have played the same leading role in portfolio assessments for at least the past four years.
- Staff's actions and behaviors did not promote learning: staff recorded all portfolio assessment results, without encouraging teachers to observe and learn from them, and teachers and school board members were not asked to share their ideas about their lessons learned

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5 CARE does not have budget to support these materials for the 2012 school year. Presumably school boards will use SIP budgets to cover materials for the upcoming year.

6 CARE does not have budget to support these materials for the 2012 school year. Presumably schools will use SIP budgets to cover general teaching materials for the upcoming year.

The consultant has seen evidence of a number of potential reasons for such behavior, including lack of understanding of the concepts of sustainability and empowerment; a lack of understanding of *how* to adapt behavior to empower and transfer capacity; and the fact that capacity-building conflicts with staff's personal interest of keeping their jobs (Messmer, 2011a).

There is a risk that, through such behavior, staff are, at best, failing to transfer maximum capacity to the SBs and teachers and, at worst, creating a level of dependency.

## **6. STRATEGIC PRIORITIES, OBJECTIVES AND RECOMMENDED ACTIVITIES**

The consultant's recommendations to CARE, for both addressing the key challenges associated with the exit (section 5) and ensuring the sustainability of activities currently supported by HCEP, have been consolidated into 6 strategic priorities: (i) teacher staffing and salaries, (ii) school management, (iii) school support from the education system, (iv) school resources, (v) interaction with stakeholders; and (vi) handover of HCEP-led activities. Across these priorities, there are a total of 22 objectives, each with a set of recommended supporting activities which are summarized in section 15.

While some of these objectives are achievable in the short-term, others will require longer-term interventions. The consultant does not envisage a need for a local NGO to implement these longer-term interventions; however, there is an identified need for a Technical Assistant (TA). This TA will have two primary roles, including the provision of technical support at the DOE level, as well as monitoring and evaluation of select activities at HCEP-supported schools. These roles, and the reasons for this recommendation, are further explained in section 8.2.

### **6.1 Teacher Staffing & Salaries**

#### *6.1.1 Schools are Adequately Staffed with Motivated Community Teachers*

Among the top concerns of CTs and SBs associated with the handover of the schools to the MoEYS are the job security of current CTs – which is threatened by differences between CARE and MoEYS staffing practices (section 5.1.2) – and the regularity of teacher salary disbursements (5.1.1). The latter risks teacher demotivation and resignation.

CARE's objective, then, should be two-fold: (1) retain as many CTs as possible and (2) replace any CTs who resign to ensure that the school remains adequately staffed.

To these ends, most immediately, CARE should consult with high-level MoEYS and seek their commitment to (1) retain both teachers where there are currently two teachers per class (section 5.1.2.1) and (2) not practice multi-grade teaching after the handover (section 5.1.2.2).<sup>7</sup> CARE should seek to get these commitments as early as possible. If MoEYS will not retain two teachers per class, CARE should address any new teacher needs through redistribution of the current teachers, as opposed to recruiting new ones. Moreover, if MoEYS requires that multi-grade teaching be practiced in grades 4-6, CARE should plan to provide appropriate training to teachers.

Once there is clarity on these staffing issues, and once the POE has indicated the number of SSTs that will be deployed to the schools in the 2013 school year, CARE should work with SBs and CTs to decide the teacher allocations across grade levels. In the case of excess

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<sup>7</sup> MoEYS/POE officials consulted on this exit strategy are not able to make these decisions at their level (Appendix F).

CTs, SBs recommend that teachers with the best qualifications be retained (Appendix F).

CARE should also work with MoEYS/POE to understand what the teachers' status and payment terms will be once they are on MoEYS payroll. Teacher salary payments will be more regular if they are paid as other BE CTs, by UNICEF-provided budget (once every 3-4 months), as opposed to if they are paid as contract teachers (once per year). However, it is not clear how long UNICEF will support the MoEYS BE program; withdrawal of their budget will translate to CTs being paid once per year.

Early communication of teachers' payment terms to SBs and CTs may allow CARE to anticipate any CT resignations and plan for their replacements. Moreover, CARE should work with SBs and CTs to devise alternative community-level strategies they can use to help keep their teachers motivated.

### *6.1.2 Teachers' Salaries Are Paid On-Time and in Full Amount by MoEYS*

In addition to regularity of teacher salary disbursements, on-time and fair payment of salaries, by MoEYS, is also a priority concern for community teachers (section 5.1.1) and should be a long-term objective for CARE. Using data collected after the handover of teacher salary responsibility, CARE should advocate to the MoEYS and POE for on-time and fair salary disbursements.

### *6.1.3 Community Teachers Have State School Teacher Qualifications*

Facilitating ways for CTs to earn SST qualifications is a means of working toward more regularly paid teacher salaries (section 5.1.1), which is linked to teacher (and SB) motivation. Although SSTs report late salary disbursements which come in less-than-full amounts, they are paid more regularly than contract teachers (every 1-3 months vs. once per year). Moreover, with SST qualifications, CTs in grades 4-6 will have improved job security (section 5.1.2.3). As recognized by the POE Deputy Director<sup>8</sup>, retaining teachers from the community in these grade levels, as opposed to replacing them with SSTs from outside, will help sustain a sense of community ownership (Messmer, 2011c). Lastly, with SST qualifications, teachers are eligible to play the role of school director, which is likely to lead to improved SB and school director collaboration (section 5.2.5).

To meet this objective, CARE should offer TTC scholarships to those CTs who meet enrollment eligibility criteria. Though this could create short-term staffing challenges at some schools, the long-term benefits, not to mention the risk of permanently losing these teachers to farm or other activities, should be prioritized.

Most CTs do not meet TTC eligibility criteria: many have not completed grade 9, while others exceed the 16-25 age requirement. However, some have participated in CARE-provided pre- and in-service teacher training for almost 10 years. CARE should negotiate special processes with MoEYS for CTs to earn SST qualifications. Discussions with MoEYS should start now, with the goal of agreeing special processes before the handover; however, it is anticipated that negotiations may extend beyond CARE's exit from these schools.

## **6.2 School Management**

### *6.2.1 Stakeholders Recognize and Respect the Roles of the School Board*

It is essential that stakeholders recognize and respect the roles of the school board before CSU's exit (section 5.2.1). The first step in working toward this objective is securing

<sup>8</sup> At the stakeholder consultation workshop, Mr. Pa Satha shared his concerns about replacing CTs with SSTs from outside the community in a side conversation with a CARE staff member. He is concerned that it will create a rift between the community and the POE/DOE and affect their future relations.

agreement from POE, DOEs, and SBs on what those roles should be. The consultant has defined what CARE should aim for, in section 3. Where possible, agreement at POE level should be on general roles – for example, “assist with student registration” – leaving scope for each SB, with the “school director,” teachers, and DOE, to define exactly how they will assist. This will help account for differences in the SBs' desired roles across the schools (see Appendix C), and will also facilitate community ownership. Appendix C details what MoEYS policy and guidelines say on SB and SSC roles, as well as stakeholders' ideas, which will be important for preparing these discussions.

One SB recommended that the roles of the SB (and “school director”) be documented and signed by relevant parties (Appendix F). Particular attention should be paid to the schools' teacher management systems, student registration processes and PB management structures and processes, as these are shared roles between the SB and “school director.”

At the consultation workshop, MoEYS/POE highlighted the importance for SB and “school director” cooperation and stressed the need to respect the four good governance principles (Appendix F). Because the MoEYS/POE prioritized this as one of the most important considerations for the handover of the schools, it is recommended that CSU engage the POE in providing training, or leading discussions, on “good governance” with school boards, “school directors” and teachers. This could be a powerful message coming directly from the POE.

The above activities are aimed at establishing recognition and respect for SBs amongst those currently engaged in the schools. Although not suggested by stakeholders, the consultant also recommends that CARE re-start pre-placement training for SSTs who are assigned to teach in community schools. Training should introduce the teachers to the community culture, BE teaching methodology, *BE Guidelines* and life in a remote area. To explore opportunities for sustainable delivery of this training, CARE should engage POE and the Stung Treng TTC in discussions about how open they are to the idea of an NGO providing this training and how they can be engaged in both the short and long-term.

#### *6.2.2 School Boards are Involved in Withdrawing, Planning and Monitoring PB Budgets Which Are Used Transparently to Resource the School*

All stakeholders agree that SBs should be involved in PB planning and monitoring; this is also a recognized role of school support committees in state schools (Appendix C). The MoEYS/POE also suggest that a SB member participate in PB budget withdrawal (Appendix F, section 5.2.2). Working with stakeholders to put these practices into place should be a CSU priority. Once PB withdrawal, planning and monitoring are formally recognized as SB roles (section 6.2.1), CSU should work with DOE (or others from POE, if required) to provide SBs, SSTs and CTs with practical training on PB planning and withdrawal processes. SBs should also be made aware of their schools' PB entitlements.

Additionally, CSU should work with the DOE, SB, SSTs and CTs at each school to define and document<sup>9</sup> PB roles and responsibilities and agree and document school-level control mechanisms (section 6.2.1). SBs and CTs have a wealth of ideas about such control mechanisms (Appendix F). Processes may vary by school, but CSU should encourage that PB income and expenditures be posted in a public place. After PB funding disbursements, CSU should ensure that each schools' processes are evaluated by stakeholders to ensure that they are working as planned.

By July 2012, SBs should be able to identify how much PB funding their school received and

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<sup>9</sup> Documentation of responsibilities was a recommendation of the Krola SB (Appendix F)

what was purchased. As the consultant understands it, PB budget planning happens once per year, in September. It is therefore recommended that monitoring of SB involvement in PB processes continue through the end of 2013. The means for continuing this monitoring post-CSU exit is described in section 8.

This is a more direct approach to addressing challenges associated with PB funding than CSU has taken in the past. It will be important for CSU to tread carefully as setting up these management structures and control mechanisms will reduce personal benefits that may have been reaped by SST (or DOE) from PB in the past (section 5.2.2).

Separately, but related, MoEYS/POE has offered to request UNICEF-supported budget to provide general teaching materials to the schools. However, it is recommended that CARE decline this support on the basis that these schools already receive PB funding intended for this purpose. Most community schools are not yet eligible for PB, hence the support of materials.

#### *6.2.3 School Boards and DOE Have Established Working Relationships*

There is a need to build working relationships between SBs and DOE to ensure that SBs are confident to approach and communicate with DOE in the future (section 5.2.3). To this end, CSU should look to increase SB-DOE interactions in the next 19 months. This should include arranging at least two DOE visits to the schools each year, for meeting with SBs and observing BE classes. DOEs should also be engaged in PB process training for SBs (section 6.2.2), as well as meetings to define PB management, teacher management and student registration processes at each school (section 6.2.1). CSU should also look to engage DOEs in School Board Assemblies, where appropriate, making sure to provide opportunities for SB-DOE engagement.

#### *6.2.4 School Boards Understand Portfolio Assessment Processes*

Of their current roles, SBs are least confident in continuing portfolio assessment following CARE's withdrawal (section 5.2.4). CARE should provide additional training on this process, with particular emphasis on the role of the SB, to SBs, and also POE/DOE. CARE staff should also adapt their role in the 2012 portfolio assessment: less leading, more observing and advising (section 5.5)

#### *6.2.5 On-going Training is Provided to School Boards*

MoEYS/POE and SBs, alike, prioritize the need for on-going SB training (section 5.2.6). MoEYS/POE suggested that POE support these trainings through funding provided by the Capacity Development Partnership Fund (CDPF). CARE should further discuss this with POE to ensure that it is budgeted for in the POE 2013 AOP and is a budget priority for future years. Ideally, trainings would be organized twice per year and the first POE-provided training would be scheduled before the exit of CSU.

#### *6.2.6 Schools are Staffed with State School Teachers from the Community*

Experience from HCEP-supported schools suggests that when SST, from outside the community, are appointed school directors, they tend to undermine the roles of the SB (section 5.2.5). However, where the SST is from the community (for example, PLK) or where there are no SST (Krola, Mais), school boards are well-respected. By supporting activities that will lead to schools staffed with SST from the community, CARE will help to sustain the SB roles, as well as a sense of community ownership. As discussed in section 6.1.3, this can be achieved by providing CTs with scholarships to study at TTC and by negotiating special processes for CTs to earn SST qualifications. Additionally, this is reason for CFSS's provision of TTC scholarships to grade 9 graduates. Twelve students, from 4 HCEP-supported communities, sat the exam in November 2011; should these students be

accepted into TTC, they will have their certifications in time for the start of the 2013-2014 school year.

### **6.3 Support from the Education System**

#### *6.3.1 DOEs Have Awareness of BE and Technical Capacity Implement BE*

As DOEs are the level of the Ministry that works most closely with the HCEP-supported schools, there is a need to ensure that DOEs are aware of the MoEYS's formal BE program and also have the technical capacity to support the schools and oversee BE implementation (section 5.3.1).

MoEYS/POE representatives suggested that DOE technical support be provided by POE, MoEYS and CARE. CARE's next step, then, should be to agree the nature of this technical support with the POE. CARE and POE should consider the wider need for DOE support across Ratanakiri, as opposed to limiting it to the 3 districts with HCEP-supported schools. DOE technical support is recommended as a longer-term intervention, though steps should be taken towards preparation and initial implementation in 2012. The consultant recommends that technical support be provided by a TA, which is an integral part of this exit strategy and is further discussed in section 8.

Additionally, as recommended by SBs and CTs from multiple communities, CSU should organize DOE visits to schools, for meetings to learn from school boards and class observations to learn from teachers. DOEs should also be more engaged in SBAs. These activities serve multiple objectives (section 6.2.3).

More immediately, CSU and the POE Counterpart should meet the Veunsai DOE, who was unaware of the MoEYS's formal BE program, to introduce the BE Guidelines as well as POE and CARE's work in formal BE. CARE should also work with POE to make sure that the Veunsai DOE is involved in all future POE communications and meetings regarding BE.

Lastly, CSU should meet with the O'Chum and Veunsai DOEs, who were absent for much of the consultation workshop, to update them on CARE's plans to handover the schools to MoEYS.

#### *6.3.2 Schools Are Monitored by POE/DOE*

There is a need to improve POE and DOE monitoring of schools, for the purpose of overseeing general school operations, providing technical support to teachers, and motivating the school boards (section 5.3.2). To this end, CARE should work with UNICEF and VSO on improving POE and DOE school monitoring. This, in combination with the provision of technical support to DOEs, are important steps to handing over TTU's current support to teachers (section 6.5.7).

#### *6.3.3 Discriminatory Attitudes Towards Ethnic Minorities Are Curbed*

As a means of ensuring that SBs and CTs can confidently interface with DOE, there is a need to curb discriminatory attitudes toward ethnic minorities (section 5.3.3). While stakeholders – especially SBs and CTs – identified discrimination as a problem, none made specific suggestions about how it should be addressed (Appendix F). The consultant recommends that, as a longer-term intervention, CARE provide sensitivity trainings for POE, DOE, cluster directors and SSTs. The aim of these trainings would be to develop appreciation for other cultures and individual differences.

## **6.4 School Resources**

### *6.4.1 All Students Have Adequate Learning Materials*

It is a community priority that students have notebooks, pens, pencils, etc for school (section 5.4.1). Many stakeholder groups, including MoEYS/POE, suggested that these materials be supplied by government, using UNICEF-provided budget. CARE should follow-up with the POE on their recommendation, confirm that student materials are in the 2013 AOP and understand how many years POE can commit to providing these supplies.

That said, UNICEF-funded materials is not a sustainable solution. It is important that this be communicated to communities, as eventually this responsibility will fall to them.<sup>10</sup> UNICEF budgets can also be delayed affecting material provision, as has reportedly happened at POE-supported BE schools (section 5.4.1). CARE should set community expectations accordingly and identify alternative sources of materials. CARE should also highlight this issue to UNICEF.

### *6.4.2 Schools Receive PB Budgets On-Time and In Full Amount*

Schools' only sources of future funding will be PB budgets, which often come late and in less-than-full amounts (section 5.4.2). Although not mentioned by stakeholders, CARE should consider advocating for regular disbursement of full PB budgets, as a longer-term intervention. In the meantime, CARE should set expectations of SBs and teachers, encouraging them to identify alternative sources of materials. A resourceful mother in PKC suggested that the school use cassava in place of chalk.

## **6.5 Interaction with Stakeholders**

### *6.5.1 Staff Practice Empowering Behavior Which Promotes Capacity-Building of Community Members*

Ensuring that staff practice empowering behavior which promotes capacity-building of community members is essential to prevent further dependency (section 5.5) and to achieve and sustain the desired CSU outcomes. This applies, not only to CSU staff, but also to TTU, RPU and BB teams who interface with school boards and teachers at HCEP-supported schools.

To this end, CARE should provide training and coaching to its staff. Specific training needs include:

- Effective use of questioning and listening, for training and facilitation (section 10)
- Concept of sustainability
- Concept of empowerment<sup>11</sup>, with behavior modeling

Refresher training and/or reinforcement of these practices and ideas in day-to-day work should be a priority. Modeling of appropriate behavior and actions as preparation for major activities in the communities (for example, portfolio assessment, stocktake or student enrollment) is one means of reinforcing empowering behavior.

Linked to this, CARE management and Team Leaders need to allot time for monitoring the behavior of staff in communities. This is the only means of ensuring that staff are practicing what the training has set out to achieve.

CARE should also consider incentivizing field staff to achieve desired outcomes. This could

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<sup>10</sup> It is understood by the consultant that strict PB budget allocations do not allow for funding of these materials. These costs are borne by parents who send their children to state schools.

<sup>11</sup> A two-day all-staff training has recently been held, but requires more follow-up work.

be through objective-tied bonuses or promotions.

## **6.6 Handover of HCEP-Led Activities to Stakeholders**

### *6.6.1 Teachers Monitor Student Attendance with Inputs Provided by POE/DOE (CSU/TTU)*

Teachers currently monitor student attendance using class lists produced by CSU. POE also produce custom lists for their BE community schools, but will not have the bandwidth to do this in the future. CSU-prepared attendance lists should be replaced with MoEYS forms, provided by POE/DOE. In the 2012 school year, TTU should train teachers to complete these forms and then monitor implementation to ensure that they are correctly filled in.

### *6.6.2 Teacher Attendance is Managed Without Inputs from CARE (CSU)*

CSU currently provides schools with teacher attendance forms, which school board members (or in some cases, teachers) use to track attendance. As CSU works with DOEs, SBs, school directors and teachers to define teacher management systems at each school (section 6.2.1), a replacement for this CSU-provided tool should be created. Solutions may vary by school.

### *6.6.3 Teachers and School Boards Enroll Students in School Independently of CARE (CSU)*

CSU maintains a database of children, age 3 and up, residing in each community and uses it to identify those who are eligible for school enrollment each year. CSU provides this information to SBs and teachers who use it to ensure that all eligible students register. CSU should withdraw this support in 2012, and SBs and teachers should get this information locally, from village chiefs. Per section 6.2.2, student registration processes, including clear roles and responsibilities, should be defined by SBs, teachers and DOEs before the Sept/Dec 2012 student enrollment. CSU should plan to play a monitoring role only; additional monitoring should be conducted by the TA in 2013 (section 8.2).

### *6.6.4 Teachers and Parents Run Sports Programs (CSU)*

CSU has provided sports equipment to schools, and with support from an international volunteer, leads recreation activities throughout the school year. CSU should change the way these activities are run to increase the chance of their continuation after CARE's exit. Instead of working directly with students, CSU should train volunteer teachers and/or parents on how to lead activities and implement a regular, on-going sports program.

### *6.6.5 Teachers and POE/DOE Conduct Stocktake Independently of CARE (RPU)*

At the end of each school year, RPU takes inventory of the BE resources at each school. RPU should plan to hand stocktake activities over to teachers and DOE/POE by 2013. POE and teachers hold this responsibility at POE-supported BE schools; however, problems and inaccuracies required RPU to support stocktake at these schools in 2011. RPU should provide training to teachers and POE/DOE and ensure that they are engaged in 2012 stocktake. The TA should monitor stocktake activities in 2013 (section 8.2).

### *6.6.6 Teachers, School Boards and POE/DOE Conduct Portfolio Assessment Independently of CARE (TTU)*

Coordinated by TTU, CARE staff lead portfolio assessment at the close of each academic year. Resources for this activity, including plastic folders, are supplied by CARE. TTU should plan to hand coordination and facilitation of this activity over to teachers, SBs and POE/DOEs.<sup>12</sup> This handover should involve training (section 6.2.4), but also monitoring,

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12 POE has challenged portfolio assessment as the student evaluation process at BE schools and has suggested that this process be replaced with the state school student evaluation process (section 9, Appendix F). This recommendation is made on the basis that portfolio assessment continues as the student evaluation process at BE schools.

which in 2013, should be the role of the TA. Teachers should be encouraged to reuse plastic folders; any new materials should be purchased with PB funding. CARE management has reported that portfolio assessment is not running well at POE-supported BE schools; TTU should consider engaging stakeholders from these schools in any trainings.

#### *6.6.7 DOE Provides Technical Support to BE Teachers (TTU)*

TTU and the POE counterpart currently provide technical support to BE teachers at HCEP-supported schools on regular school visits. TTU should withdraw this support by the end of the 2013 school year. Ultimately, DOEs should provide technical assistance to teachers; important steps in reaching this longer-term goal are building the technical capacity of DOEs (section 6.3.1) and improving DOE/POE monitoring (section 6.3.2).

### **7. TIMING OF CSU EXIT AND HANDOVER OF SCHOOLS TO MOEYS**

The exit of CSU and handover of schools to the MoEYS should happen gradually over the course of the next two years. The CSU exit is largely dictated by the end of the funding cycle, which is June 30, 2013. The consultant recommends that the schools be officially handed over to MoEYS six months later, at the start of the 2013-2014 school year, in December 2013. This will allow for a second opportunity to monitor PB planning processes, student registration, stocktake and portfolio assessment, activities which happen only once per year, in September.

The key exit milestones, or the strategic outcomes associated with the objectives outlined in section 6, have been plotted in the roadmap below.<sup>13</sup> Long-term strategic outcomes, which are not likely to be achieved before the handover of the schools, are listed on the right side of the roadmap. The roadmap is based on a number of assumptions:

- The academic calendar runs from December to September, with a one month break in June (section 9)
- Per the MoEYS schedule, PB budget planning happens in September
- Support provided by MoEYS (for example, teachers salaries, learning materials, school board training) must be budgeted for in the POE/MoEYS AOP, which is planned each December. Realistically, the soonest these can be added to the AOP is December 2012, for the 2013 calendar year.
- MoEYS will agree to support teachers' salaries, school board training, etc at the schools before they are officially handed over

An important milestone is the handover of responsibility for payment of teachers' salaries. It is recommended that this happen early – 11 months before the official handover of the schools – in anticipation of delays and other challenges.

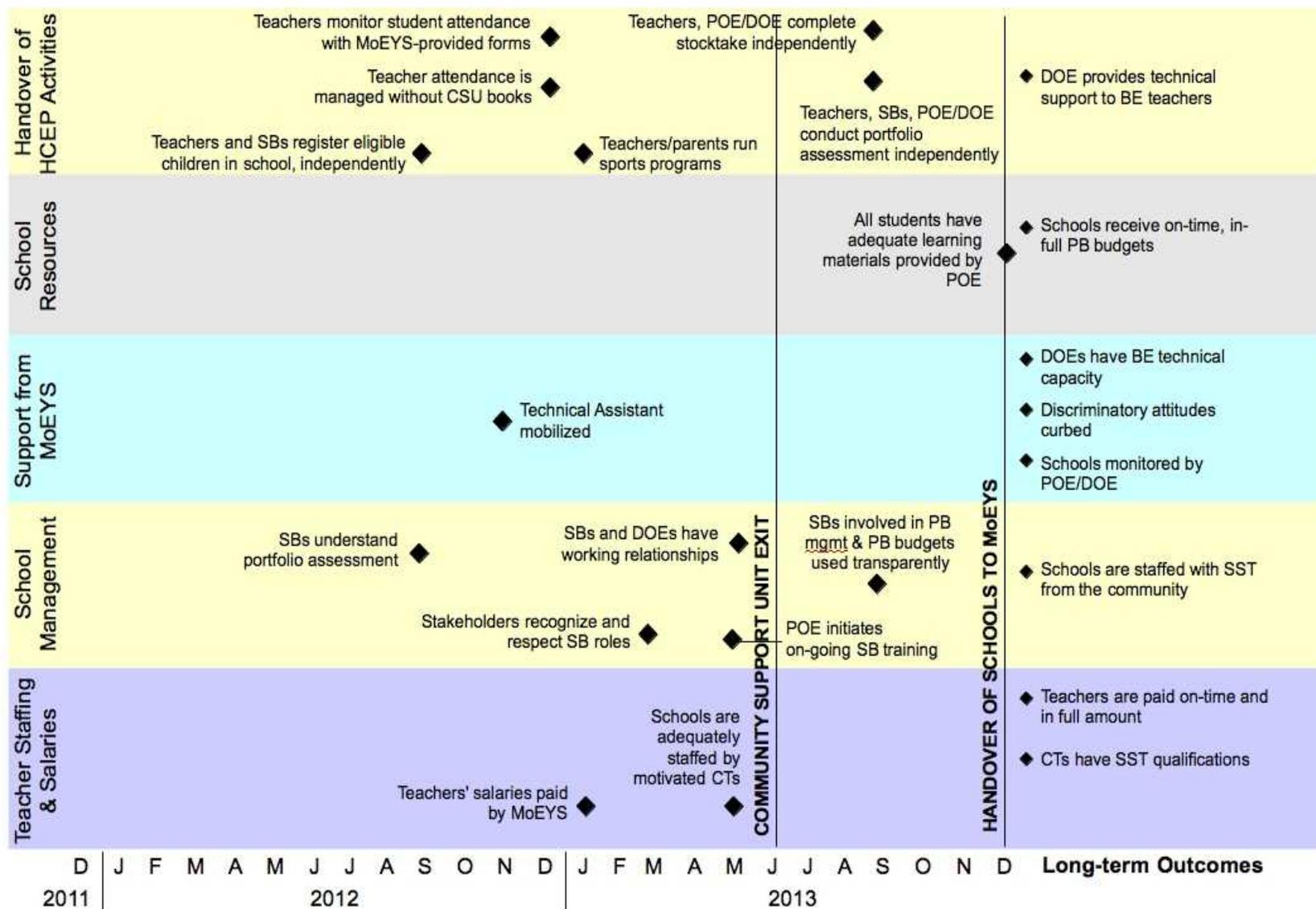
Another key milestone is mobilization of the Technical Assistant, in late 2012. This position is mobilized before the exit of CSU, not only to initiate technical support to DOEs, but also to be prepared to continue monitoring of school boards' involvement in PB planning and student registration processes after June 2013 (section 8.2).

To complement this high-level roadmap, a more detailed activity roadmap, which proposes timeframes for the strategic activities recommended in section 6, as well as a monitoring framework, is included in section 15.

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<sup>13</sup> This roadmap excludes outcomes related to objectives that are internal to CARE (ie Staff Practice Empowering Behavior Which Promotes Capacity-Building of Community Members)

## Strategic Outcomes for CSU Exit & Handover of Schools to MoEYS



## 8. STRATEGY FOR SUPPORTING POST-EXIT ACTIVITIES

### 8.1 Summary of Post-Exit Activities

After CSU's exit in June 2013, but before the handover of the schools to MoEYS, in December 2013, there will be some monitoring needs, particularly for activities that happen only once per year, in September. These include:

- Monitoring of PB budget planning processes, particularly the involvement of SBs in these processes (section 6.2.2)
- Monitoring of student registration (section 6.5.3)
- Monitoring of portfolio assessment, led by teachers, school boards and DOE/POE (section 6.5.6)
- Monitoring of stocktake, conducted by teachers and DOE/POE (section 6.5.5)

Moreover, some of the recommendations outlined in section 6 are not expected to be achievable before the handover of the schools and will require longer-term (or on-going) interventions. These include:

- Agreement of processes for CTs to earn SST qualifications, with MoEYS (section 6.1.3)
- Provision of TTC scholarships to CTs and grade 9 graduates (sections 6.1.3, 6.2.6)
- Advocacy, for on-time and in-full teacher salary and PB disbursements (sections 6.1.2, 6.4.2)
- Technical support at the DOE level (section 6.3.1)
- Strengthening of POE/DOE school monitoring, with UNICEF/VSO (section 6.3.2)
- Pre-placement training for SSTs deployed to teach in BE community schools (section 6.2.1)
- Sensitivity training for SST, cluster directors, DOE and POE (section 6.3.3)

### 8.2 Actors for Implementation of Longer-Term Interventions

The longer-term interventions above fall within the scope of CARE's technical assistance contract to support MoEYS's upscaling of the BE program; other Highland Community Education Program (HCEP) initiatives, like CFSS and the Regional Training Center; or within the wider scope of the Marginalized Ethnic Minorities Program.

MoEYS/POE have already suggested that CARE play a role in providing technical support to DOEs through its technical assistance contract (Appendix F). The nature of this technical support needs to be agreed with POE and specific needs identified. However, the consultant recommends that the support involve mobilization of a Technical Assistant who could fulfill roles such as:

- Training DOEs on BE-specific teaching methodologies, with the aim of preparing DOEs to provide technical support to teachers on monitoring visits (a CT-identified need, Appendix F)
- Promoting awareness and understanding of the BE Guidelines to guide implementation
- Training on and monitoring of portfolio assessment and stocktake
- Promoting appreciation of the value of active SBs, who are models for Dimension 5 of the Child Friendly Schools Policy, and encouraging DOEs to visit SBs at their schools

In this role, the Technical Assistant should work closely with the POE, so as not to detract from POE responsibility and ownership. POE and CARE may decide that technical support should be provided to DOEs across the province, a potential benefit for the wider Ratanakiri BE program.

The Technical Assistant will fulfill a second role, associated with the CSU exit, at the HCEP-supported schools. This is a monitoring and evaluation role, which should include:

- Monitoring PB planning, stocktake, portfolio assessment and student registration processes in September 2013, before the official handover of the schools to MoEYS
- A post-exit evaluation, one year after the handover, to evaluate the exit (assuming

agreement from MoEYS, section 12)

Both roles of the Technical Assistant are temporary. There should be a focus on capacity-building, with a well-defined monitoring and evaluation system linked to the phase-out of this role.

The Technical Assistant will need to be able to fill both roles and to be accountable to CARE. However, the Technical Assistant need not be an external hire. The handover of HCEP-supported schools is expected to result in reduced workloads for TTU, and to a lesser extent, RPU (section 11.3). Moreover, the handover will call for a need to redefine the role of the POE Counterpart (section 11.2). Consequently, this role could potentially be filled internally or by current seconded staff.

### **8.3 Localization as an Exit Strategy**

CARE has long considered establishing a local NGO as part of the CSU exit strategy. This is not among the consultant's recommendations, for a number of reasons. First, the nature of the recommended longer-term interventions appear to fit CARE's mandate. There does not appear to be a justified need to establish a LNGO to support these strategic initiatives, or the continued monitoring of CSU (and other HCEP-related) activities.

Additionally, there is evidence of some levels of stakeholder dependency on CARE (section 5.5) (Messmer, 2011a). Continued interventions, especially if provided at the school level, by a LNGO, risks on-going or further dependency of communities on outside support.

Moreover, informed by the successes, failures and challenges of ten localization case studies, the consultant has identified a number of risks associated with localization of the CSU team (Messmer, 2011b). Key risks include:

- Not all staff are committed to the idea; at best, two would stay. Reduced remuneration levels would present further risks to staff retention and motivation.
- Securing funding is the biggest challenge. Lack of donor interest in the mandate is a risk, as is lack of experience in fundraising and donor communication to secure funds. Legal registration delays and drawn-out donor negotiation processes risk dependency on CARE for funding.
- Successful localization is largely contingent on the willingness of the parent NGO to cede almost complete autonomy to the LNGO, both in terms of its establishment as well as its ongoing operations, including its relationships with donors, beneficiaries, and all relevant stakeholders. Where the parent NGO has been reluctant to let go of control, either in the creation or functioning of the LNGO, this has tended to result in failure.
- LNGO failure presents a reputational risk to CARE.

The consultant also conducted a risk assessment on handover of activities to an existing LNGO (Messmer, 2011a) and identified some organizations who are currently engaged in bilingual education, who could be considered for such a handover (Messmer, 2011b). However, based on the nature of the longer-term interventions recommended in this exit strategy, the consultant recommends that they are best carried out by CARE.

## **9. INTEGRATION WITH NATIONAL BE PROGRAM**

There is a push by the MoEYS to change some aspects of the national BE program, for the purpose of easier integration into the education system. Most recently, national discussions have focused on the BE academic calendar (December through September, with a one month break in June), though the Ratanakiri POE has also challenged portfolio assessment as the student evaluation process (Appendix F). CARE may choose to advocate for retainment of these aspects of the BE model at the national and provincial levels. However, should changes be made to the MoEYS BE program, CARE should plan to implement those changes at HCEP-supported schools as a means of planning for a smooth handover.

## **10. STAFF CAPACITY NEEDS FOR EXIT STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION**

CSU staff training needs for exit strategy implementation were identified through three months of staff observation as well as two semi-structured group interviews. It is recommended that CARE provide training, or coaching, in the following areas to prepare staff to implement this strategy.

### **10.1 CSU Team Training / Mentoring Needs**

- Facilitation skills, with particular emphasis on effective questioning and listening
- Communication skills, especially for communicating with DOE
- PB processes
- BE guidelines
- Learning, as a core value of CARE: what it means and why it is important (staff associate this with CARE's commitment to staff development)
- Monitoring
- Concepts of sustainability and empowerment, with practical examples and emphasis on behaviors that promote capacity-building (section 6.5.1)

Other needs, though lower in priority for the purpose of this exit strategy, include:

- Child Friendly Schools, the six dimensions
- MoEYS Education Strategic Plan, and how CARE's work is aligned

### **10.2 Team Leader-Specific Training / Mentoring Needs**

- Staff empowerment, particularly through improved delegation and encouragement of staff to take initiative
- Effective communication for the purpose of keeping staff informed (for example, of meetings, information pass-downs from management and especially exit strategy related matters (section 13.2))
- Team motivation
- Monitoring and evaluation
- Administration (preparation of meeting invitations, etc), for DOE communication

## **11. STAFFING CONSIDERATIONS**

The CSU exit and handover of the HCEP-supported schools to MoEYS has a number of staffing implications that should be considered by CARE management.

### **11.1 CSU Team Leader and Community Support Officers**

Four staff – including the Team Leader and 3 Community Support Officers – will be relieved from their duties with the exit of CSU at the end of June 2013. Assuming CARE does not have other roles for these staff, it is recommended that CARE prepare them to look for a new job, by coaching them on how to conduct a job search, prepare a CV and succeed in an interview.

### **11.2 POE Counterpart**

CARE has seconded a member of staff from the POE to assist with implementation and monitoring and evaluation of activities at HCEP-supported schools and to liaise between CARE and POE. With the handover of these schools to the MoEYS, CARE should assess the need for a POE counterpart and redefine the role that any seconded staff should fill.

### **11.3 Other HCEP Teams**

The handover of the HCEP-supported schools to the MoEYS should lead to reduced workloads for TTU (in terms of portfolio assessment, monitoring visits, etc) and to a lesser extent, RPU teams. CARE should assess if, or how, these workload changes affect staffing level needs.

## 12. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Monitoring of progress toward the strategic objectives outlined in this report – particularly those that are to be achieved before the CSU exit in June 2013 and the school handover in December 2013 – is critical if the desired outcomes (section 3) are to be sustained. The consultant has recommended objectively verifiable indicators (OVIs) and means of verification (MOV) for each strategic objective and activity, as included in the activity roadmap of section 15. CARE should look to engage stakeholders in monitoring, where at all possible.

Moreover, it is recommended that CARE seek permission from MoEYS, and reserve some budget, to evaluate the exit a year after the handover. Such an evaluation could provide valuable lessons learned for CARE, as well as MoEYS/POE.

## 13. COMMUNICATION

### 13.1 External Communication

There are a wide range of stakeholders associated with this exit, including school boards, teachers, DOEs, POE and MoEYS, not to mention students and parents. Keeping stakeholders informed of plans and progress is important throughout the next two years. Where possible, this should be done through existing structures, such as the POE-CARE Planning Group and School Board Assemblies. It will be important for SBs to share information with their communities.

Ideally, DOEs will be more engaged in SBAs and will be kept informed through this medium. However if this is not the case, CARE should identify alternative ways to keep DOEs informed.

It should be noted that CARE has already communicated the idea of starting a LNGO as part of its exit strategy to SBs and teachers in SBAs. Initial mention of a LNGO was made in 2008; more recent discussions were had in July 2011. If CARE opts to proceed with the recommended strategy, careful consideration should be made about how to communicate the change in plans to community stakeholders.

### 13.2 Internal Communication

The responsibilities for the activities recommended as part of this exit strategy span across the three HCEP teams, as well as CARE management in Ratanakiri and Phnom Penh. Effective communication across these teams and management levels will be important for implementation of this strategy. It is recommended that regular exit strategy review meetings be held to evaluate progress made toward strategic objectives and to discuss challenges.

## 14. RISK ASSESSMENT

The following table summarizes the key risks to a successful, responsible exit and the potential outcomes, if these risks are not addressed. In case CARE chooses not to take on-board the recommendations put forth in this report, CARE's strategy should aim to address the risks that are identified here.

**Table 1: Key Risks to a Responsible Exit**

<b>Key Risk</b>	<b>Potential Outcome if Risk is Not Addressed</b>
Community teacher demotivation	Teacher resignation, teacher shortages and a demotivated school board
No agreement on school board roles	No recognition of or respect for school board responsibilities, school board demotivation and

	disempowerment
School board excluded from PB management, a key lever for ownership	Disempowered school board, with reduced sense of ownership
School board / school director disrespect and lack of working relationship	Disempowered school board, with reduced sense of ownership
Lack of DOE capacity to support school and disrespect/discrimination against school boards and community teachers	Lack of state support to the school, school board exclusion, loss of school board leverage, and school board demotivation
Lack of school board capacity-building	School board demotivation and inactivity
Lack of teaching and learning resources	Teacher demotivation, student demotivation, reduced student enrollment and attendance, school board demotivation
School board and stakeholder disempowerment (by staff interactions)	School board and stakeholder dependency and no sustainability of intended outcomes
Poor communication with stakeholders	Unmet expectations, stakeholder disappointment, loss of trust, stakeholder demotivation and disempowerment
Poor internal communications and staff demotivation	Poor coordination and lack of direction, poor communication to stakeholders, undermined sustainability of intended outcomes
Lack of post-exit monitoring and evaluation	Loss of lessons learned to inform on-going program development for CARE and MoEYS

## 15. Strategic Activity Roadmap

The following roadmap shows recommended activities for each objective and complements the strategic outcome roadmap of section 7. Key discussions and decisions that need to be made with high-level MoEYS have been included amongst the recommended activities.

Strategic Objective	Recommended Key Activities	Responsibility	2011		2012												2013												Long-Term	Activity OVI	Activity MOV	Objective OVI	Objective MOV
			N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D					
<b>Teacher Staffing &amp; Salaries</b>																																	
Schools are adequately staffed by motivated community teachers	Consult with MoEYS on multi-grade teaching, 2 teachers/class, and teacher payment terms (contract, UNICEF-supported, etc)	CARE Mgmt				X																					Agreement with MoEYS on multi-grade teaching, 2 teachers/class, and teacher payment terms	Meeting minutes	- Schools are adequately staffed to MoEYS agreed guidelines by May 2013 - Teacher attendance levels are consistent with levels before handover of salaries to MoEYS by May 2013	- TTU teacher records - CSU teacher attendance data			
	Inform SBs/CTs of meeting plans and results	CARE Mgmt / CSU	X	X																						Announcement during SBA	SBA minutes						
	Plan for any potential CT replacements, anticipating any 2013 resignations	TTU			X																						Likely resignations identified	TTU MER					
	Agree with POE number of SST to be deployed to schools	TTU																									Number SSTs identified	Meeting minutes					
	Agree 2013 teacher allocations with each SB	TTU																									Teacher allocations complete for each school	TTU MER					
	Work with SBs and teachers to devise community-level strategies to maintain teacher motivation	CSU																									Teacher motivation strategies created in SBA	SBA minutes					
Teachers are paid on-time and in full amount by MoEYS/POE/DOE	Meetings with MoEYS/POE to agree number of teachers to transfer to MoEYS payroll and timing of transfer; information communicated to SBs and teachers	CARE Mgmt																									- Agreement with MoEYS on number of teachers and timing by Oct 2012 - Agreement communicated to SBs/teachers by Oct 2012	Minutes from meetings	- Teachers' salaries are in MoEYS/POE 2013 AOP by Dec 2012 - Teachers receive salary from MoEYS/POE/DOE by Jan 2013	- Ask POE - Ask teachers			
	Advocate for timely and fair salary disbursements; document plan and initiate implementation	CARE Mgmt																								LT	- Advocacy plan documented by Dec 2012 - Implementation initiated by Feb 2013	PC has completed plan PC's report	- Teachers receive salaries on-time and in full amount (long-term)	- Ask teachers			
CTs have SST qualifications	Offer TTC scholarships to CTs who are eligible	TTU																									Scholarships offered	TTU MER	Former CTs have SST certificates	Ask teachers to see certificates			
	Negotiate processes for CTs to earn SST qualifications with MoEYS	CARE Mgmt			O																					LT	Meetings initiated by Jan 2012 and SBs/CTs informed of progress	Meeting minutes					

Strategic Objective	Recommended Key Activities	Responsibility	2011		2012												2013												Long-Term	Activity OVI	Activity MOV	Objective OVI	Objective MOV
			N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D					
<b>School Management</b>																																	
Stakeholders recognize and respect the roles of the school board	Meeting to agree roles of SB and "school director" with POE, DOE, SBs	CARE Mgmt					X																				SB and "school director" roles agreed with POE, DOE and SBs	Meeting/workshop summary report	- Each school has documented school management roles and responsibilities, involving school boards, that is agreed by all stakeholders by Dec 2012  - School boards feel respected by school director and all teachers by Mar 2013	- View documented school mgmt R&Rs  - Interview SB			
	Training on 4 points of the good governance system for SBs and school directors by POE	CSU						X																			Training on good governance held for SBs and school directors	CSU MER					
	Meetings with DOE, SB, teachers to define teacher management system, including clear roles and responsibilities, at each school	CSU																										Each school has a teacher management system with clear roles and responsibilities			CSU MER		
	Meetings with DOE, SB, teachers to define student registration process, including clear roles and responsibilities, at each school	CSU																										Each school has a student registration process with clear roles and responsibilities			CSU MER		
	Meetings with DOE, SB, and teachers to set up PB management structures/processes, including clear roles and responsibilities of SB (per below)																																
	Work with TTC, POE, DOE to provide training to SSTs, to introduce them to differences between state / community schools and the role of the school board, before placement at BE schools	TTU																													- Agreement with TTC/POE to partner on training - Training program designed - Training begins	- Meeting minutes - PC has training modules - TTU MER	
SBs are involved in PB withdrawal, planning and monitoring and PB budgets are used transparently to resource the school	Work with POE/DOE to train SBs, SSTs and CTs on PB processes	CSU / POE Counterpart						X																			Training held for SBs and teachers on PB processes	CSU MER	- Each school has documented PB budget management structure which involves SB by Feb 2012 - Ask SB				
	Meetings to plan and evaluate school-level PB processes and budget management responsibilities – with POE/DOE, SB, SST, CT – to ensure transparency and accountability	CSU / POE Counterpart								X																		- Each school has PB budget management structure, involving SB by Feb 2012  - Meetings held with each school to evaluate school-level PB processes (per PB disbursement schedule)	CSU MERs	- Each SB can identify what their school purchased with PB funding by Jul 2012 - PB income and expenditures are posted in public place by Jul 2012 - SBs and all teachers have participated in PB budget planning for 2013 and 2014  - Visit school to see publicly displayed information - Ask all teachers and school board members			







Strategic Objective	Recommended Key Activities	Responsibility	2011		2012												2013												Long-Term	Activity OVI	Activity MOV	Objective OVI	Objective MOV
			N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D					
<b>Handover of HCEP-Led Activities</b>																																	
Teachers monitor student attendance with inputs provided by POE/DOE	Consult POE/DOE about use of MoEYS student attendance forms and get their commitment to provide from Nov 2012	TTU																										POE/DOE agreement and commitment	Meeting minutes	- All teachers use MoEYS student attendance form correctly by May 2012	- Check attendance forms at schools		
	Train teachers to use MoEYS student attendance forms	TTU																										Training held	TTU MER	- POE/DOE provides student attendance forms to all schools by Nov 2012	- Verify with teachers		
Teacher attendance is managed without inputs from CARE	Meetings with DOE, SB, teachers to define teacher management system, including clear roles and responsibilities, at each school (per above)																													Each school has an established teacher management system that does not involve use of CSU-prepared teacher attendance forms by Dec 2012	Verify with school director and SB		
Teachers and school boards register eligible children in school independently of CARE	Meetings with DOE, SB, teachers to define and review student registration process (including clear roles and responsibilities) at each school (per above)																													Teachers and school boards register all eligible students and complete student registration forms accurately without use of CARE database in Sept/Dec 2012	CSU MER		
Teachers (and/or parents) run sports programs at the school	Training for teachers and parents on how to run sports programs	CSU																										Trainings held at each school	CSU MER	Teachers (and/or parents) independently run sports programs at the school by Jan 2013	Ask teachers		
Teachers and POE/DOE complete stocktake independently of CARE	Train teachers and POE/DOE to do stocktake	RPU																										Training held	RPU MER	Teachers and POE/DOE accurately complete stocktake with CARE advisors by Sept 2012	Stocktake debriefing report		
	Identify and mobilize Technical Assistant (per above)																													Teachers and DOE/POE accurately complete stocktake with CARE observer by Sept 2013	Technical Assistant report		
	Monitor POE/DOE and teachers in stocktake activities	Technical Assistant																										Results of monitoring visits	MER				



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