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BEQUAL

Basic Education Quality and Access in Lao PDR



Implementation Plan

Phase 1 (October 2018 – August 2020)

October 2018

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Acronyms

ACER	Australia Council for Educational Research
ASLO	Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes
BEIF	BEQUAL Education Innovation Fund
BNC	BEQUAL NGO Consortium
CACIM	Committee for the Approval of Curriculum and Instructional Materials
CIS	Curriculum Implementation Support
DESB	District Education and Sports Bureau
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (Australia)
DOGs/ESGs	District Operating Grants converting into Education Support Grants
DOF	Department of Finance (MoES)
DoP	Department of Planning (MoES)
DTE	Department of Teacher Education (MoES)
ECE	Early childhood education
EMIS	Education Management Information System
ESDP	Education Sector Development Plan
ESGs	Education Support Grants
ESWG	Education Sector Working Group
ETSP	Ethnic Teacher Scholarship Program
EU	European Union
GEDSI	Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion
GoL PDR	Government of Lao PDR
GPE	Global Partnership for Education
ICE	Inclusive Education Centre
IFEAD	Institute for Educational Administration Development
INSET	In Service Education and Training
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency

KRA	Key Result Area
KSA	Key Subject Area
LDC	Least Developed Country
MoES	Ministry of Education and Sports
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
ODA	Official Development Assistance
PDP	Professional Development Program
PESS	Provincial Education and Sports Service
RIES	Research Institute of Educational Science
TDC	Teacher Development Centre
ToT	Training of Trainers
TTC	Teacher Training College
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VEDC	Village Education Development Committee
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

1 Executive Summary

Following the mid-term review in 2017 it was agreed that Phase 1 of BEQUAL would be extended until August 2020 and operate under a **modified program logic model** (Figure 1, below), which commits BEQUAL to assist Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) with the development of the new curriculum materials for grades 1-2 and to assist MoES with the implementation of the new curriculum nation-wide.

A new delivery strategy for the program was developed by June 2018 with a focus on assisting the Ministry with developing and delivering curriculum materials for grade 1 and 2, developing workshops for familiarising teachers and relevant stakeholders at school levels with the new curriculum materials and pedagogy and developing a grant-based mechanism with which Provinces and Districts would be able to implement the workshops. Consequently, some activities will be phased out after their completion as planned. Key activities such as Pedagogical Advisor (PA) upgrading will be funded by UNICEF, infrastructure will be completed according to the planned budget by March 2019, and learning and experience from access and participation activities implemented by the BEQUAL NGO consortium (BNC) will inform future BEQUAL programming.

As a result, the Program needed to review program activities, structure and resources. Between July and October, the program jointly with key stakeholders worked towards a revised Implementation Plan (this document), and a new Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) framework and plan.

Workshops with relevant MoES departments in July (for socialisation of the new Program logic and delivery strategy), in August (for developing work plans and the MEL plan, identifying departments' responsibilities) and in September (for dissemination and confirmation of the work plan and MEL plan) increased MoES ownership of BEQUAL supported activities and strengthened the partnership between BEQUAL and MoES.

The Annual Plan spans over a period of two years, aligned to the end date of Phase 1, August 2020. The purpose of the plan is to identify key activities across the three intermediate outcomes, their allocated budget and responsibilities for their implementation.

A key focus is on identifying smart and realistic indicators that allow the program to adapt its approaches within short time spans. The MEL plan and results framework are an integral part of the Annual Plan(s).

2 Introduction

This Implementation Plan covers the period October 2018 until August 2020. It is based on a refinement of the Basic Education Quality and Access in Lao PDR (BEQUAL) Program. A conceptualised strategic way forward document¹ for program implementation was developed between April and May 2018 and discussed and endorsed with the Ministry in July 2018.

The Implementation Plan was developed through a series of internal workshops between BEQUAL advisers and MoES staff in August and September 2018. These workshops involved translating the delivery strategy into a practical work program with a corresponding MEL framework.

Section 1 of this document briefly describes the current situation and revised goals and objectives. Section 2 outlines the current strategic approach and assumptions, while Sections 3-5 outline implementation plans under the three main outcome areas (1) Implementing the national primary curriculum; (2) Improving teacher education and (3) strengthening planning, management, support and monitoring of teachers. Section 6 outlines recent management and organisational changes that

¹ Internally referred to as the draft Delivery Strategy

will support the revised program delivery strategy. Section 7 outlines broad risks and risk mitigation measures and section 8 provides an overall schedule of activities.

2.1 Current situation

BEQUAL was a jointly developed technical assistance program designed by MoES and DFAT based on supporting the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) Laos Education Delivery Strategy 2013-2018 (June 2013), recommendations associated with the Joint Sector Review of the MoES Education Sector Development Plan (ESDP, 2011 – 2015) and a DFAT review of Australia’s investments in the Education for All – Fast Track Initiative conducted in 2012. BEQUAL was designed to be a ten-year investment (2015 – 2025) with the first phase beginning in 2015 and concluding in 2018. Following the mid-term review in 2017 it was agreed that Phase 1 of BEQUAL would be extended until August 2020 and operate under a modified program logic model given in figure 1.

These changes resulted in BEQUAL having to adapt programming priorities. The most significant being to refocus resources to work with MoES to develop the new primary curriculum which is prioritised in the Education Sector Development Plan (ESDP 2016 - 2020). The new delivery strategy focuses on the successful national implementation of the primary curriculum, and providing additional, targeted support to districts with identified educational disadvantage.

The revised program logic recognises that more effective teaching and better governance, especially at the sub-national level, are important contributing factors that significantly impact on improved educational outcomes.

If teachers apply better teaching practices in early school years, that is practices that have been widely acknowledged for improving children’s learning, such as active learning, then learning outcomes across the system will improve over time. But for teachers to apply better teaching practices, governance processes need to be in place at the school and district levels that allow local level administrations to plan, support, fund and monitor the new teaching practices. Without such governance processes, sub-national administrations will not provide the required support to school administrations and especially teachers, and teachers will not be able and motivated to use the new materials and teaching methodologies.

Achievement of the two end of program outcomes will be facilitated through three intermediate outcomes. In addition, the Program will focus on outcome enabling activities, particularly the revised Gender, Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) strategy², the revised MEL framework and plan³ and a communication strategy⁴ that supports MoES with messaging about the revised curriculum and materials.

There is a causal relationship between the three intermediate outcomes which means achievement of any one is contingent upon achievement of the others. *If* sub-national administrations implement processes for planning and monitoring and have access to the required funds, *then* teachers will receive the required support to improve their teaching practices through training, Pedagogical Advisers (PAs), school principals and peers to apply the curriculum materials and embedded pedagogical approaches. *If* MoEs is able to develop, produce and deliver revised curriculum materials to districts and schools on time for the start of the new school year⁵, *then* teachers will be able to use the revised textbooks, teacher guides and resource materials appropriately.

² Developed and sent to DFAT in October 2018

³ Developed and sent to DFAT in November 2018

⁴ Developed and sent to DFAT in August 2018

⁵ September 2019 for Grade 1 materials; September 2020 for Grade 2 materials

The revised program logic with the two outcomes and three intermediate outcomes better reflect and acknowledge well recognised theories and practices including lessons learned that are likely to enhance educational delivery in weak systems, i.e. the need to ‘intervene across more than one sphere to improve the chance of seeing substantial improvement in one or more outcomes.’⁶

⁶ Page 3: Snilstveit, B., Stevenson, J., Menon, R., Phillips, D., Gallagher, E., Geleen, M., Jobse, H., Schmidt, T. & Jimenez, E. (2016). *The impact of education programs on learning and school participation in low- and middle-income countries: A systematic review summary report* (3ie Systematic Review Summary 7). London: International Initiative for Impact Evaluation. Retrieved from <http://www.3ieimpact.org/en/publications/systematic-review-publications/3ie-systematic-review-education-effectiveness-srs7/>

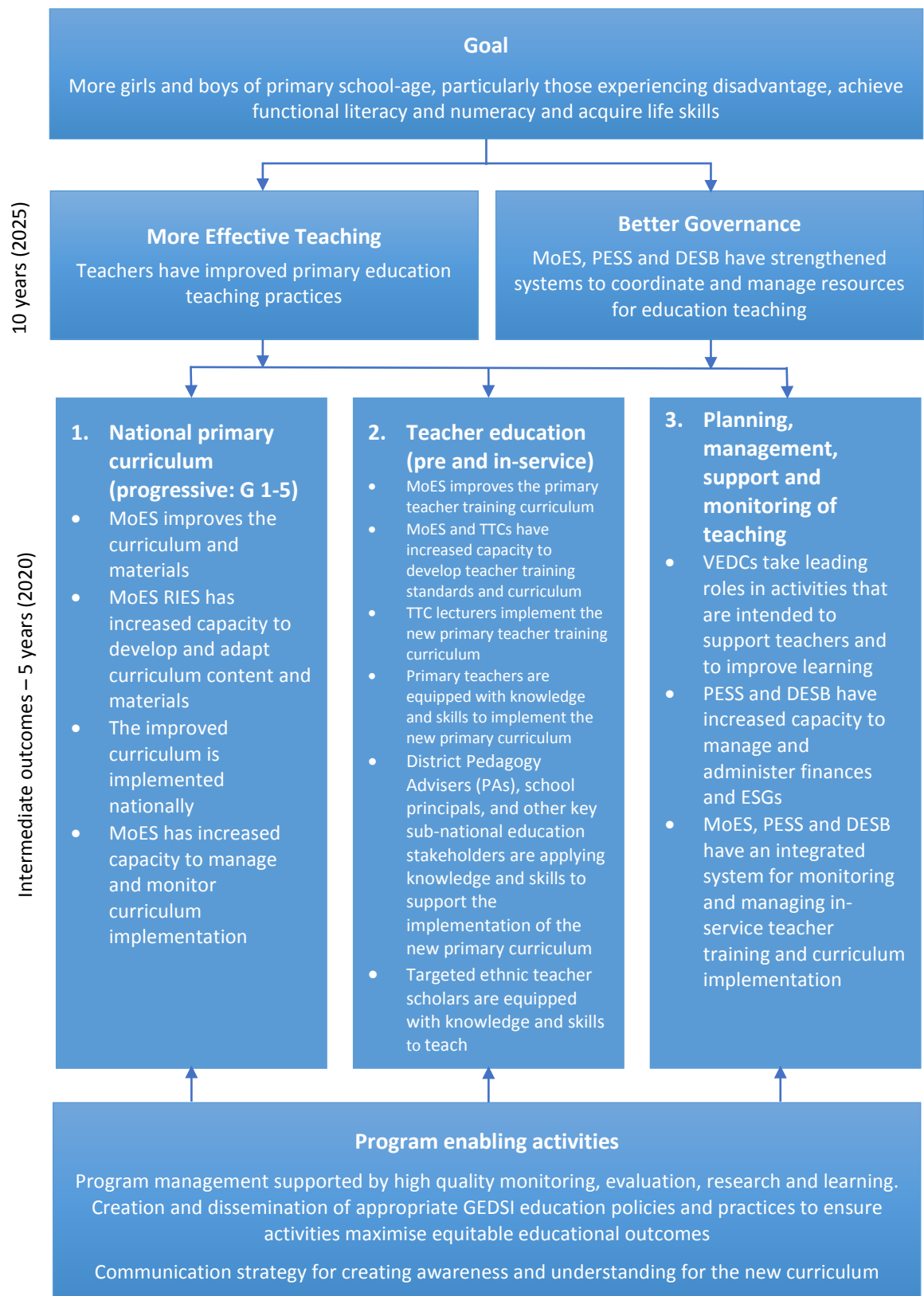


Figure 1 Revised program logic model

2.2 Goals, Objectives and Targets 2018—2020

The new program goal “**More girls and boys of primary-school age, particularly those experiencing disadvantage, achieve functional numeracy and literacy and achieve life skills**” reaffirms support for all primary aged children and continues to emphasise that BEQUAL will particularly support children experiencing disadvantage. The new program logic recognises the two end of program outcomes “**More effective teaching**” and “**Better governance**” are important contributing factors to improved educational outcomes.

Facilitation of the two end of program outcomes will be through three intermediate outcome areas: (1) **Implementing the Primary National Curriculum**; (2) **Improving Teacher Education** and (3) **Strengthening Planning, Management, Support and Monitoring**. These will be priorities during this implementation period and underpinned by program enabling activities, particularly an enhanced Inclusive Strategy and a revised monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) framework.

The critical targets for MoES and BEQUAL, between October 2018 and August 2020, are:

- Gaining endorsement of the new primary curriculum through the Committee for the Approval of Curriculum and Instructional Materials (CACIM) by December 2018
- Establishing the grant management system for education support grants by March 2019
- Finalising curriculum materials for grade 1 by June 2019 and grade 2 by February 2020
- Printing and distribution of grade 1 materials through a commercial contract to all schools by August 2019 and grade 2 by August 2020.
- Commencing in-service training of all primary school teachers for grade 1 by September 2019. In service training will be ongoing throughout phase 1.
- Commencing a pre-service training trial using the new curriculum for year 1 teaching by October 2019.
- Completion of infrastructure and Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) facilities in targeted districts by March 2019. This includes an updated hygiene training plan, based on the ‘Fit for School’ approach which is embedded in MoES activities.

3 Strategic approach and assumptions

The strategy for implementation over the next two years will focus on delivery, skills and knowledge transfer; capacity development at the individual and institutional levels linked to the revised intermediate outcome areas; ensuring GEDSI principles are embedded in all materials and processes; and a clear focus on achieving sustainable outcomes. It will progressively transition from a predominantly capacity substitution approach to an increased focus on capacity building where MoES will take a greater role in implementation using BEQUAL technical assistance to progress its objectives.

Capacity development strategies will be tailored to the needs of each area requiring support, based on ongoing assessments of advisers working with MoES staff on a daily basis. The objective is to ensure MoES staff at national and sub-national levels have the capacity and technical skills to undertake required tasks related to their professional role at MoES with progressively reduced assistance, and the ability to train and induct new staff to build organisational capital. Approaches may include, but not be limited to, the following:

- On the job training and mentoring
- Training workshops and seminars
- Joint problem solving
- Jointly developing policies, procedures, technical guidelines and standards
- Train the trainer (ToT) programs
- Peer to peer learning

- Providing support for existing post graduate qualifications in relevant areas of need and monitoring graduates' use of new skills and knowledge.
- Study tours to share practices

During the next two years there will be a renewed focus on MEL, engagement, communication and GEDSI. The final period of Phase 1 will be critical in terms of curriculum development and implementation; and will involve a series of trials and evaluations that will help inform implementation in subsequent years, including the level of support required to achieve full curriculum implementation.

BEQUAL will work with MoES to realign its resources to focus on the following technical deliverables being managed by MoES⁷:

- Progressively developing and implementing the primary curriculum i.e. Grades 1 to 2 (excluding maths⁸) and the primary teacher training curriculum (2 Teacher Training College trials), concluding in 2023/24.
- Providing text books, teacher guides and relevant supporting materials (excluding maths) to all primary schools in Lao PDR.
- Developing capacity of MoES personnel, particularly associated with curriculum (national and primary teacher training), in-service and teacher support systems, inclusive of GEDSI and child protection principles. This includes the progressive development and implementation of a new primary teacher training curriculum.
- Providing general in-service support to all principals, PAs and primary teachers, plus additional support to teachers and schools in districts confirmed as 'targeted' BEQUAL districts.
- Ensuring ethnic teachers are trained and deployed to appropriately resourced schools in BEQUAL 'target' villages.
- Strengthening governance and management systems (planning, inclusive education, financial, monitoring and evaluation) at national and sub-national levels that can provide ongoing support to schools and teachers as the new curriculum is implemented.

3.1 Policy dialogue and donor coordination

The BEQUAL implementing partner (Coffey) will work closely with DFAT to provide information to ensure it is able to engage productively with MoES and other donors. It is critical that DFAT maintains policy dialogue with MoES and donors working in the primary sub-sector to maximise programming coherence. BEQUAL will continue to liaise and coordinate with other initiatives:

- Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), which is continuing to work with MoES/RIES to develop the primary grade maths curriculum⁹. The Grade 1 math curriculum has rolled out in 2018/19. Curriculum cohesion and professional development pathways are now divergent, and this may put the whole curriculum process at risk. DFAT is continuing discussions with JICA and MoES to minimise negative impacts.
- USAID, which has recently initiated a tender in support of 'learn to read'. The 'learn to read' program is primarily an Early Childhood Education (ECE) program, however there is possibility it may expand into early primary grades. The investment is for USD20 million over five years with a start date of September 2018.

⁷ All aligned to priorities in the 2016-2020 ESDP.

⁸ The math curriculum and in-service support is the responsibility of JICA

⁹ This program began in 2016 and is scheduled for completion in March 2022. It has a contract value of US\$6,600,000 and is managed through Padeco, a Japanese managing contractor.

- The European Union (EU) and UNICEF who are currently designing a primary education Complementary Support (CS) program over four-years. The program is expected to focus on: Strengthening Systems for Planning, Financing, Management Information Systems (MIS) & Quality Assurance (QA); Teacher Management and Quality, and Evidence-based Sector Analysis and Policy Dialogue. This will include upgrading the PA system.
- Global Partnership for Education (GPE) which has commenced in July 2015 and was due for completion in July 2019. The program is well behind schedule with a very low rate of disbursement. A decision on the future of GPE II is not expected until late in 2018.
- World Bank pre-primary curriculum development and UNESCO pre-primary pre-service curriculum development.

3.2 Targeting

BEQUAL will continue to implement using a two-tiered approach: (1) national (general) and (2) targeted (intensive). This approach aims to maximise the potential for achieving intermediate outcomes; pilot testing interventions in the most challenging environments; maximising the potential for success of the national primary curriculum; and supporting the most educationally disadvantaged districts.

BEQUAL will provide intensive support to 32 districts which were identified¹⁰ as lowest performing districts based on ASLO Grade 3 data and survival rates. BEQUAL has invested more than AUD 7,347,249¹¹ in 29 districts where 364¹² ethnic teacher trainees will be deployed over the next three years. Three additional districts from the Sekong Province (Dakchung, Kaleum and Thateng) have been added to these 29 for more intensive targeting. The list of targeted districts is given in Table 1.

Table 1 Districts targeted under BEQUAL for targeted support

Province	Districts
Khammouane	Nakai, Nhommalat, Bualapha, Mahaxay, Xaybouathong, Xebangfay
Luangnamtha	Long, Sing, Nalae, Viengphouka
Phongsaly	Samphanh, May, Phongsaly, Nhot Ou, Khoua
Saravan	Ta Oi, Lao ngarm, Samuoi, Saravane, Toomlarn,
Savannakhet	Nong, Sepone, Phalanxay, Phine, Xonbuly, Thapangthong, Vilabuly, Atsaphone, Outhoomphone
Sekong	Kaleum, Dakcheung, Thateng
6 Provinces	32 Districts

3.3 Education Support Grants

Education Support Grants (ESGs) will be used to support Provincial Education and Sports Service (PESS) and District Education and Sports Bureaus (DESBs) with the implementation of the new curriculum.

¹⁰ Taking the 10 poorest performing provinces in ASLO grade 3 (2017) data and applying the <75% survival rate at district level, identifies 32 lowest performing districts.”

¹¹ This represents approximately 32% of BEQUAL investment in all activities since program inception until June 2018 – including infrastructure in targeted villages/schools.

¹² 3 dropped out

Each province¹³ will receive an education support grant so they can fund the training of teachers, principals and PAs through the newly established system of Master and Provincial trainers (MTs and PTs). Provinces will be required to plan for and manage the administration of six-day training workshops to be carried out at district level in the period of July – August of each year. Should BEQUAL have budget available, the grant size will include funding for a second round of training prior to Semester 2 of each school year. This will be determined by April of each year.

An additional grant will be provided to BEQUAL's targeted districts. This 'district' grant will allow districts to provide additional support throughout the school semesters through monitoring and support visits, peer learning and mentoring. As UNICEF already provides funds to 6 of BEQUAL's 32 target districts to cover PA outreach to schools, only the remaining 26 BEQUAL districts will receive BEQUAL grants. However, all 32 will receive support from BEQUAL to monitor curriculum implementation progress in the form of MEL tools, an information management system, training and follow up technical support.

The program will explore trialling an output/incentive based ESG model for Semester 1/2019 with the 32 target districts. Guidelines will be developed by February 2019 for decision.

In 2018 in support of the newly deployed Ethnic Teacher Scholarship Program (ETSP) graduates and in preparation for the nation-wide curriculum implementation commencing in July 2019 for grade 1, BEQUAL is providing intensive support to ETSP graduates through a teacher induction program after deployment to their schools, beginning September 2018. This is a pilot program in school year 2018/19, TINDUP, with the objectives of testing a mentoring program and how new teachers can be supported through peers and principals. 29 DESBs will receive an ESG to visit the target schools and monitor the local mentoring process between the ETSP graduate and a more experienced teacher from the same or a neighbouring school and Five PESS will receive a separate ESG to monitor the work of each of the 29 DESBs. Since there are no ETSP graduates in three¹⁴ of BEQUAL's target districts, those DESBs will not receive ESGs.

BEQUAL will provide assistance to PESS and DESBs for grant management and monitoring.

3.4 Communications

BEQUAL has developed a detailed communications strategy for 2018-2020. Its objectives are to:

- Promote the work and impact of BEQUAL
- Ensure visibility and consistent branding of Australian Aid and EU (and USAID for the relevant components of BEQUAL)
- Support the overall implementation of BEQUAL, and especially the new curriculum (specific support for curriculum implementation is part of a separate strategy and action plan).

The communication strategy aims to increase awareness, knowledge and understanding of BEQUAL and the contributions development partners, specifically Australian Aid, are making to the Lao education sector. It also aims to build widespread support for improving education in Lao PDR through the MoES and BEQUAL.

The program will use a wide range of communication tools and channels including brochures, posters, stand-alone banners, newsletters, promotional tools, program website, news stories, social media, press releases, public diplomacy events, briefing notes, and videos.

For the remainder of phase 1, BEQUAL will:

¹³ 17 provinces and one municipality

¹⁴ The three districts were only added in mid 2018 as a result of the new targeting strategy under the revised program logic.

- 1 Ensure the implementation of the Australian Aid, EU and USAID branding and visual identity guidelines
- 2 Maintain an up-to-date set of printed bilingual communication materials and promotional tools
- 3 Generate articles on program achievements
- 4 Flag and organise public diplomacy events
- 5 Maintain a live, dual-language program website
- 6 Produce videos materials
- 7 Ensure visibility of cross-cutting themes (Gender, Ethnicity, Disability) in all communication releases
- 8 Create targeted communications activities to support program implementation

3.4.1 Curriculum communications strategy

During the next three months a separate communication strategy will be finalised for the implementation of the new primary curriculum. The purpose is to mitigate the risks associated with this major undertaking by ensuring that all stakeholders receive the right messages at the right time and are ready to embrace the change. These risks include:

- Lack of institutional and public awareness
- Low level of engagement in the process
- Bottlenecks in communication flows
- Resistance to change.

The specific communication objectives of this strategy are to raise:

- the level of motivation and understanding of the different stakeholders—MoES staff at national and sub-national level, Village Education Development Committees (VEDCs), principals, teachers, NGOs and other education partners—regarding the logistics of implementing the new primary curriculum to ultimately get their active engagement in the success of the program
- the level of motivation and understanding of the end users of the curriculum—teachers, children, parents and care-givers, principals and PAs—to achieve the effective adoption of the new teaching and learning approach.

3.5 Assumptions

Implementation of activities to achieve outputs and intended outcomes for BEQUAL in the next two years operate under a series of key assumptions. These are:

- There is widespread acceptance of the need to improve teaching and learning in schools
- Coordination and collaboration continue to improve in MoES across key departments such as Research Institute of Educational Science (RIES), Department of Teacher Education (DTE), Inclusive Education Centre (IEC), Department of General Education (DGE), Institute for Educational Administration Development (IFEAD) and Department of Finance (DoF) to support and implement the national primary curriculum. There is continued coordination at the provincial and district levels.
- MoES is committed to undertaking monitoring, evaluation and research to support the ongoing implementation of the new national primary curriculum.
- Inclusive education principles and policies are understood, supported in legislation, and being appropriately implemented.
- Ethnic teacher graduates are willing and able to be deployed to targeted villages.
- Over time, the MoES will provide resources to implement the curriculum in areas not directly supported by BEQUAL.

- New curriculum materials being developed are fit for purpose and take into account the current capabilities of teachers.
- Teacher education (pre-service and in-service) activities are carried out in coordination with new primary curriculum materials development. There is strong and genuine interaction between teacher education entities (TTCs, TDCs and DTE) and primary education partners (Department of Pre-Primary Education, RIES, PESS, DESB and schools)

The risks associated with these assumptions proving incorrect, and planned mitigation strategies, are presented in Annex 1. The assumption(s) underlying specific risks are noted in the Annex for ease of reference.

4 Implementing a new National Primary Curriculum

The national implementation of the revised primary curriculum will be a significant educational event. Modernising the Lao primary curriculum is a critical prerequisite for improved education quality, with significant impacts on the primary teacher training curriculum and national teaching standards, as well as the practical support and advice provided to teachers.

MoES will use the support provided by BEQUAL to revise the national primary curriculum and develop new teaching and learning materials¹⁵ to meet the needs of the diverse Lao primary school population. This will make a significant contribution to improving learning outcomes.

The revised draft primary curriculum framework has been developed and is to be confirmed by the Committee for the Approval of Curriculum and Instructional Materials (CACIM) in December 2018. Grade 1 to 5 subjects will be progressively implemented from 2019 until 2024, beyond Phase 1¹⁶.

MoES will use BEQUAL support to implement the curriculum nationally. To address the very low resource settings of disadvantaged communities, BEQUAL will provide targeted resourcing, including additional teacher in-service training to targeted districts, as agreed by MoES and DFAT.

4.1 Renewing the National Primary Curriculum

Intended outcome (1.1): MoES has the capacity to develop and improve the curriculum and materials

Key performance indicators: New primary curriculum framework endorsed December 2018
 Percentage (actual versus target) of new primary curriculum materials and teacher guides completed for grades 1 and 2 and having undergone a thorough GEDSI analysis and review.

Completion of the Lao to non-Lao pilot program for grade 1

Outputs and target dates

- New grade 1 text books and teacher guides are produced and completed (including GEDSI analysis and review) by January 2019
- New grade 2 text books and teacher guides are produced and completed (including GEDSI analysis and review) by December 2019
- Development of Grade 3 textbooks and teacher guides including GEDSI analysis and review is nearing completion by August 2020

¹⁵ DFAT, through BEQUAL, is supporting the development of all subjects within the primary curriculum, except math. Math is being supported by JICA.

¹⁶ It must be highlighted all intermediate program outcomes will not be achieved prior to the completion of Phase 1 (August 2020) as both curriculum development and teacher education activities project beyond Phase 1.

- 36 graded decodable readers (12 for grade 1 and 24 for grade 2) completed by April 2019
- 40 story books selected for grade 1 by October 2018
- Evaluation report on the Oral Lao pilot program by July 2020

Responsibility: Lead agency - Research Institute of Educational Science (RIES)

Throughout the remaining period of Phase 1 RIES will be supported by BEQUAL to develop curriculum and teaching and learning resources, including the pilot of an oral Lao Program in early grades¹⁷. In developing the curriculum content for grade 1 there will be close coordination with USAID’s “Learn to Read” program. There will also be a systematic GEDSI analysis for curriculum materials developed. This GEDSI analysis process will include capacity building and coaching of MoES staff to progressively build their skill level. It is anticipated that initially only a sample of curriculum content is analysed as skills are built, and progressively the volume of content analysed increases.

By the end of the current phase it is expected that a new primary curriculum will have been completed for grades 1 and 2 and new corresponding teacher guides and textbooks would have been printed and distributed. At the same time new curriculum materials for grade 3 will be developed and near completion.

Tasks

1. *Revise the primary curriculum framework*

- a) Finalise the draft primary curriculum framework and submit to CACIM for endorsement
- b) Guide alignment of national assessment framework with revised primary curriculum framework and materials
- c) Facilitate endorsement and institutional use

2. *Develop textbooks and teacher guides*

- a) Draft textbooks and teacher guides for grade 1 and 2. Text books will cover 3 subjects – Lao Language, Science and Environment, and Moral Education. Teacher guides will cover 6 subjects - Lao Language, Science and Environment, Moral Education, Music, Physical Education, and Art and Handicraft.
- b) Develop GEDSI analysis guidelines and undertake reviews
- c) Develop structured guidance to assist teacher to diagnose learning disabilities, extension activities for learners with additional needs, suggestions for adapting curriculum content to local contexts and suggestions for supporting learners for whom Lao is not their mother tongue.
- d) Integrate improved formative and summative assessment

3. *Develop graded decodable readers*

- a) Develop the decodable readers for grade 1 and 2.
- b) GEDSI analysis and review

4. *Select story books and develop teacher resource packs*

- a) Select the storybooks¹⁸
- b) GEDSI analysis and review
- c) Confirm contents of teacher resource packs

¹⁷ This should be done in close cooperation with the USAID ‘Learn to Read’ investment.

¹⁸ Storybooks that underwent GEDSI screening by the BNC will be included in this process. Ultimately REIS has final say on which books will be selected for inclusion in the grade 1 curriculum.

5. *Pilot an Oral Lao Program*

- a) Document the design for the pilot program and monitoring and evaluation framework
- b) Develop materials and training activities reflecting the need to teach non-Lao speaking children to make Lao literacy more achievable for non-native speakers
- c) Monitor implementation and assess effects on teachers, students and student learning outcomes

6. *Assess findings, lessons and recommendations from BEIF and BNC*

- a) Review monitoring reports and identify relevant information
- b) Adopt or adapt approaches or materials

4.2 Building the capacity of MoES to develop the primary curriculum and materials

Intended outcome (1.2): MoES has increased capacity to develop and adapt curriculum content and materials

Key performance indicator: Percentage of staff within MoES assigned to curriculum writing and development who can operate with reduced specialist technical assistance.

Outputs and target dates

- 7 curriculum writers with graduate qualifications (1 BA, 5 MA and 1 with a PhD) are applying their new skills, and mentoring others, by July 2019
- 30 staff assigned to curriculum writing and development can operate with reduced need for technical assistance by August 2020

Responsibility: Lead agency - Research Institute of Educational Science (RIES)

RIES has responsibility for many areas, and curriculum development is only one dimension of their work. Curriculum management and development is a very intensive and specialised activity and many RIES personnel have not had recent relevant experience in recent primary curriculum pedagogy.

Several international and domestic partners¹⁹ have been providing support to RIES over recent years and this has enhanced RIES' capacity to understand how and why primary curriculum changes are necessary. However, there is an ongoing need to further enhance individual and institutional capacity to ensure quality primary curriculum outputs are produced. Throughout the remaining period of Phase 1 BEQUAL will support RIES to increase its capacity to develop and adapt curriculum content and materials. Curriculum writers will continue to have their skills developed through BEQUAL with a focus on developing curricula and materials to strengthen teaching of Lao as a second language.

With assistance from BEQUAL specialists, it is expected that at the end of Phase 1 RIES will have increased capacity for curriculum content development for grades 1 and 2, including all relevant teaching materials, and an increased understanding on appropriate teaching methods. They will use these skills to start developing grade 3 materials, with continued technical support from BEQUAL. It's also expected that RIES will drive their technical assistance requirements and decide on the sort of technical support required from BEQUAL specialists. There will be a demonstrable decrease in reliance for support and an exchange of lessons between RIES staff and BEQUAL specialists.

¹⁹ Key partners include: UNICEF, ACER, Room 2 Read, Plan International and JICA

Tasks

- 1. Provide on the job training and a skills development program for curriculum writing**
 - a) Provide on-the-job training and mentoring
 - b) Monitor and evaluate progress of skills development at the individual and group level
- 2. Provide scholarships for post-graduate training for curriculum and materials development**
 - a) Guide dialogue on use of new post-graduate skills
 - b) Track/maintain counterpart relationships for better utilisation

4.3 Producing and distributing primary curriculum materials

Intended outcome (1.3): The improved curriculum is implemented nationally

Key performance indicator: Percentage of schools and teachers receiving the new primary curriculum and associated materials (grade 1 and 2)

Outputs and target dates

- RIES is progressively developing the skills, and has the hardware and software to prepare and design materials for publishing by March 2019
- All grade 1 curriculum materials reach more than 90% of schools by August 2019
- All grade 2 curriculum materials reach more than 90% of schools by August 2020

Responsibility: Lead agency – Department of Finance (DOF)²⁰

National uptake, acceptance and endorsement of the revised curriculum is critical if more effective teaching is to take place in primary classrooms nationally. To ensure this national uptake, it is critical MoES, PESS and DESB are active partners in the management and coordination of the curriculum distribution and implementation. Throughout the remaining period of Phase 1 BEQUAL will support RIES and other MoES stakeholders to ensure the improved curriculum is implemented nationally. It is expected that by the end of Phase 1 all grade 1 and grade 2 materials will have been distributed to primary schools and teachers throughout the country, and that teachers are beginning to change their teaching methods based on the new curriculum.

Tasks

- 1. Implement progressive annual production and distribution of curriculum materials to schools**
 - a) Design textbooks and teacher guides
- 2. Provide training and skills development for materials production and distribution**
 - a) Implement hardware and software necessary for design and production
 - b) Undertake training and skills development for materials production
 - c) Organise printing and distribution through commercial procurement contracts – 910,000 grade 1 textbooks; 82,500 grade 1 teacher guides; 57,000 decodable reader packages; 10,500 teacher resource packs and 10,500 storybook packages.

²⁰ DoF has a supporting role. The department responsible for distribution of school books will be identified by DoF.

- d) Implement refurbishment of MoES warehousing facilities for printed materials storage and packing.

4.4 Building the capacity of MoES to monitor and assess the design and quality of new curriculum materials

Intended outcome (1.4): MoES has increased capacity to assess quality and utilisation of curriculum materials

Key performance indicator: MoES coordinates and provides quarterly reports of progress to the Minister on the implementation and distribution of the new primary curriculum, including level of awareness raised through the communications strategy.

Outputs and target dates:

- MoES has a fit for purpose monitoring and evaluation system in place to monitor the implementation of the new primary curriculum by July 2020.
- First quarterly report on curriculum progress produced in June 2019, then every quarter until the full curriculum is rolled out in 2025.
- Communications strategy developed and agreed by MoES by January 2019.
- Communications Strategy implemented by August 2020 with guidance from MoES

Responsibility: Lead agency – Research and Evaluation Centre, RIES

Throughout the remaining period of Phase 1 BEQUAL will support MoES to have increased capacity to manage and monitor curriculum implementation.

The rollout of a national curriculum requires continuous monitoring and evaluation of the various activities contributing to the successful understanding and uptake of the curriculum. This will be particularly important during the first two years when issues will arise. MoES, PESS and DESB require the capacity and capability to ensure activities are successfully implemented and are fit for purpose.

By the end of Phase 1 it is expected that MoES, PESS and DESB will have increased capacity to manage and monitor the curriculum implementation and distribution process in a systematic way and following current regulations. It is expected that this system will continue to be developed for subsequent years.

Tasks

1. Upgrade RIES monitoring and quality assurance systems

- a) Document the curriculum development quality assurance process as it progresses.
- b) Include RIES MEL staff in the MEL network / Community of Practice activities to: increase their skills in implementing pilot programs and evaluate their success; how to conduct focus groups and key informant interviews; how to develop rubrics, mixed method approaches and apply qualitative and quantitative evaluation criteria.
- c) Support MoES RIES staff to build their capacity in monitoring the effectiveness of the new primary curriculum following the implementation of grade 1 in August 2019. This includes monitoring the capacity of teachers to teach the new curriculum and improvements in learning.

2. *Facilitate capacity for large-scale national assessments*

- a) Support finalisation and dissemination of ASLO Grade 3 (2017).
- b) Support skills development for sampling and psychometrics (directly linked to Oral Lao and SEA-PLM in Phase 1 and ASLO G3 in Phase 2).

3. *Comprehensive communications strategy is implemented*

- a) Communication products and services are developed to support the curriculum implementation using MoES systems.

5 Improving Teacher Education

Achieving real and sustainable improvements in teaching quality requires system-wide change in the alignment of primary teaching standards, pre-service education and in-service training and the primary curriculum framework. Teacher education activities must be shaped by the primary curriculum, given the vital importance of the primary curriculum to all teacher education activities.

Primary curriculum materials will guide the focus of teacher education activities, with an emphasis on changes to the primary teacher training curriculum, teacher in-service activities and professional development practices.

5.1 Renewing the primary pre-service curriculum

Intended outcome (2.1): MoES improves the primary teacher training curriculum

Key performance indicator: Percentage of pre-service training modules finalised compared to scheduled completion targets

Outputs and target dates New pre-service training curriculum materials for year 1 produced and ready for implementation by August 2020

Curriculum materials for year 1 teacher training program developed by June 2019 and trialled and evaluated by June 2020

Curriculum materials for year 2 teacher training program developed by July 2020 and ready for trial by August 2020

Responsibility: Lead agency – Teacher Development Centre (within IFEAD)

Teaching standards determine the quality of teachers being trained for deployment by MoES. Standards do this by guiding the development of pre-service curriculum and by defining the minimum level of practice expected of trainees and teachers. The teaching standards are based on the new pedagogy associated with the revised primary school curriculum and include revised modules for Inclusive Education.

By the end of Phase 1 it is expected that the new pre-service curriculum will be completed for years 1 and 2, based on an endorsed primary pre-service curriculum framework, and new teacher training standards would have been distributed.

It is also expected that the pre-service curriculum is trialled in up to 2 TTCs once it is completed, and the lessons learned are applied for full implementation. Grade 1 will be trialled during school year 2019-2020 and implemented nationwide in August 2020. Materials for grade 2 will be developed during school year 2019-2020 and the trial will start in August 2020. Curriculum writers will undertake training and receive regular support on the development of gender, disability and socially inclusive curriculum and teaching methodologies.

Tasks

1. *Revise the primary pre-service curriculum framework*

- a) Revise descriptions of subject areas
- b) Revise primary pre-service curriculum framework
- c) National Teacher Education and Advisory Board (NTEAB) endorsement

2. *Develop new pre-service curriculum materials (TTC Years 1 and 2)*

- a) Year 1 TTC educator guides and subject readers
- b) Year 2 TTC educator guides and subject readers
- c) Training for pre-service curriculum writers to enable the GEDSI tool analysis to be incorporated to the writing process
- d) A training module on Inclusive Education for inclusion in the Year 2 pre-service curriculum
- e) New curricula and materials to strengthen teaching of Lao as a second language and include gender, disability and ethnic minority issues and case studies

3. *Trial year 1 teacher training program at selected TTCs*

- a) Trial the curriculum materials for year 1 at 2 selected TTCs
- b) Evaluate and revise curriculum materials for year 1 based on the trial outcomes.
- c) Implement the curriculum nationwide for year 1 in August 2020.

5.2 Building the capacity of MoES and TTCs for primary pre-service curriculum development

Intended outcome (2.2): MoES and TTCs have increased capacity to develop teacher training standards and curriculum

Key performance indicator: Percentage of TTC PDP staff and curriculum writers who are trained and have strengthened capacity and are able to implement the GEDSI analysis tool during the writing process

Targets

- 64 TTC PDP²¹ staffs are trained in the pre-service curriculum training by August 2019
- At least 50% of curriculum writers can develop the curriculum with minimal assistance by August 2020

Responsibility: Lead agency – Teacher Development Centre (TDC)

TDC and TTCs are managing the revision of the primary teacher training curriculum. The revision aligns to the new national primary curriculum. Development of the teacher training curriculum is being undertaken by subject teams, with members drawn from all eight TTCs.

Throughout the remaining period of Phase 1 BEQUAL will support MoES and TTCs to ensure they have increased capacity to review and revise the primary teaching standards already developed with BEQUAL support and to develop curriculum. By the end of Phase 1 it is expected that TDC and TTC's are able to develop the curriculum and training materials within progressively less assistance from BEQUAL specialists.

Tasks

²¹ Professional development program initiated to strengthen overall teaching capacity of TTC lecturers who teach Maths, Lao Language and Science.

1. **Provide TTC PDP and on-the-job training in 8 TTCs**

- a) Bi-annual training workshop cycles 4, 5 and 6 by January 2020; Iterative, cumulative program
- b) Technical monitoring visits and on-the-job training for through-semester learning tasks

2. **Strengthen TTC management**

- a) Finalise visioning workshops
- b) Sensitise TTC management on new primary pre-service curriculum

3. **Assess findings, lessons and recommendations from BEIF and BNC**

- a) Review monitoring reports and identify relevant information
- b) Adopt or adapt approaches or materials

5.3 Supporting TTC lecturers to implement the new primary teacher training curriculum

Intended outcome (2.3): TTC lecturers implement the new primary teacher training curriculum

Key performance indicator:

Successful completion of trial studies in 2 TTCs

Percentage of assigned TTC educators using the new primary teacher training curriculum effectively in the trial sites

Percentage of staff graduating - at least 40% female - with post graduate qualifications who have been sponsored by BEQUAL

Outputs and target dates:

- Trainees at 2 TTCs will complete year 1 modules of the new primary pre-service curriculum by August 2020
- Evaluation report on trial implementation of the new pre-service curriculum for year 1 in 2 TTCs by August 2020
- Implementation of year 1 at all 8 TTCs in August 2020
- 22 staff (45% women) complete their Master qualification (in Teaching and Learning Curriculum, Curriculum and Instruction, or Education Administration) by September 2018
- 20 staff (55% women) complete their Master qualification (in Teaching and Learning Curriculum or Curriculum and Instruction) by December 2019
- 3 staff (33% women) commenced PhD qualifications (in Curriculum and Instruction) and will complete after August 2020

Responsibility:

Lead agency – Teacher Development Centre (TDC)

BEQUAL aims to assist TTC educators to be able to use the new primary teacher training curriculum effectively with TTC lecturers able to decide the teaching methods related to the new curriculum. By the end of Phase 1 it is expected that TTC educators are equipped to use the new primary teacher training curriculum effectively, and MoES and TTC staff have improved skills to develop a quality teacher curriculum in terms of structure, content and materials development. Implementation of year 1 will be completed in 2 trial TTCs in August 2020.

Tasks

1. Key activity: Train TTC educators in the new pre-service curriculum

- a) Develop pre-service curriculum modules
- b) Produce TTC educator teaching guides
- c) Guide the selection of required and recommended student reading materials

2. Key activity: Support trials of the new pre-service curriculum in 2 TTCs

- a) Training of TTC educators (in July 2019, prior to training for curriculum implementation support (CIS) PTTs)
- b) Monitor and assess trial of Year 1

5.4 Provide in-service training for the new primary curriculum

Intended outcomes (2.4): Primary teachers are applying their knowledge and skills to implement the new primary curriculum

District Pedagogy Advisers (PAs), school principals, and other key sub-national education stakeholders are applying knowledge and skills to support the implementation of the new primary curriculum

Key performance indicators:

Percentage of grade 1 teachers able to teach the new curriculum effectively and Grade 2 teachers able to teach the new grade 2 curriculum effectively. Percentage of Teachers in target districts teaching new grade 1 and grade 2 effectively is higher.

Percentage of training materials, including videos, fully developed, including GEDSI analysis, approved and printed/distributed against planned outputs

Percentage of Master Trainer teams and Provincial Trainer teams officially identified for all 18 provinces (as a proportion of the minimum required) with a 50% female quota.

Percentage of Master Trainers and Provincial Trainers who deliver in-service training and support to an agreed standard

Percentage of Grade 1 training packages delivered to Grade 1 teachers, principals and PAs (Rounds 1 and 2) in target districts by September 2019

Percentage of Grade 1 teachers who receive support on the new grade 1 curriculum in target districts

Percentage of PESS and DESB successfully managing ESGs to monitor and implement activities supporting curriculum implementation

Outputs and target dates:

- Finalised training package for Grade 1 curriculum training for teachers, principals and PAs, including ToT training materials for Master and Provincial Trainers by November 2018
- All Master Trainer teams and Provincial Trainer teams (female quota of 50%) are officially identified for all 18 provinces by January 2019 and have increased capacity to provide in-service training by May 2019.
- All grade 1 teachers in target districts are equipped with foundational knowledge to begin implementation of the new grade 1 curriculum by September 2019

- Target PESS and DESBs are managing ESGs for curriculum implementation support by June 2019.

Responsibility: Lead agencies – Department of Teacher Education (DTE) and RIES

The provision of professional development, through in-service activities, is essential if teachers are to understand and effectively use the curriculum in the classroom. Throughout the remaining period of Phase 1 BEQUAL will support MoES to equip primary teachers with the knowledge and skills to implement the new curriculum.

During the remaining period of Phase 1, programming investments will provide a base level of in-service support nationally, and more intensive professional development prioritising targeted Districts²².

By the end of Phase 1 it is expected that all teachers will receive training in the new primary curriculum.

Tasks

1. Develop in-service training materials for new primary curriculum

- Develop outline and structure of in-service training package for Grade 1 (for teachers, principals and PAs), including ToT materials
- Develop detailed content of in-service training package for Grade 1 (for teachers, principals and PAs), including ToT materials that address key aspects of inclusive classroom practice
- Trial and finalise Grade 1 training package, including ToT materials

2. Develop complementary training resources, including video demonstrations of good practice

- Develop and agree on content for video production
- Film good practice examples in various locations, utilising primary teachers, students and classrooms informed by applying the GEDSI rubric
- Edit and produce final videos demonstrating good practice
- Disseminate and utilise videos in appropriate teacher training and support activities, including workshops, PAs support, cluster/school group activities, etc, and using various media, including Facebook, MoES website, YouTube, etc.

3. Key activity: Establish and equip Master Trainers (MT) and Provincial Training (PT) Teams

- Confirm MT and PT institutional arrangements
- Agree Key Subject Areas (KSAs) and minimum standards
- Advertise and conduct information sessions for recruitment of trainers
- Conduct and monitor selection process ensuring female quota of 50%, ethnic diversity and people with disability are supported to apply
- Confirm MT and PT members through formal decree

4. Train and facilitate capacity of Master Trainers and Provincial Trainer teams

- Develop Orientation and Facilitation Skills training package that addresses key aspects of inclusive classroom practice for Master Trainers and Provincial Trainers
- Conduct Orientation and Facilitation Skills training for Master and Provincial Trainers
- Develop and conduct reflection and refresher workshop for Master and Provincial Trainers (after first round of Grade 1 in-service training)

²² This may include additional face-to-face training prior to Semester Two.

- d) Prepare Master Trainers to conduct ToT training on Grade 1 training package with Provincial Trainers (Round 1, prior to Semester 1)
 - e) Conduct ToT training for Provincial Trainers on Grade 1 training package (Round 1, prior to Semester 1)
 - f) Conduct in-service training for teachers, PAs and principals²³ on Grade 1 training package (Round 1, prior to Semester 1)
 - g) Prepare Master Trainers to conduct ToT training on Grade 1 training package with Provincial Trainers (Round 2, prior to Semester 2)
 - h) Conduct ToT training for Provincial Trainers on Grade 1 training package (Round 2, prior to Semester 2)
 - i) Conduct in-service training for teachers, PAs and principals on Grade 1 training package (Round 2, prior to Semester 2)
- 5. Provide PESS ESGs for provincial ToT and district-level teacher in-service training for primary curriculum implementation (all teachers, PAs and principals)**
- a) Develop guidance for PESS for implementation of provincial ToT and district-level training and support activities using ESGs
 - b) Develop training for 18 PESSs on management and administration of CIS activities using ESGs
 - c) Deliver training for 18 PESSs on management and administration of CIS activities using ESGs
 - d) Guidance and training package for PESS on management and administration of CIS using ESGs
- 6. Provide District ESGs for school, cluster and district-level in-service support for primary teachers to implement new primary curriculum (targeted districts)**
- a) Develop guidance for DESB for implementation of school, cluster and district-level support for primary teachers
 - b) Develop training for 32 DESBs on management and administration of curriculum implementation support (CIS) activities using ESGs
 - c) Deliver training for 32 DESBs on management, monitoring, and administration of CIS activities using ESGs
- 7. Monitor delivery and effects of in-service training and through-semester teacher support.**
- a) Design a monitoring and evaluation plan for evaluating the effectiveness of in-service training and through-semester teacher support
 - b) Evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency and make recommendations for subsequent in-service training programs.
- 8. Assess findings, lessons and recommendations from BEIF and BNC**
- a) Review monitoring reports and identify relevant information
 - b) Adopt or adapt approaches or materials

5.5 Select, train and deploy ethnic teachers to disadvantaged areas

Intended outcomes (2.5): Targeted ethnic teacher scholars are equipped with knowledge and skills to teach

Key performance indicator: Percentage of graduate ethnic teachers teaching effectively in target villages.

²³ Training for PAs and Principals includes training in how to support teachers' professional development through developmental observations, mentoring, and facilitating peer-to-peer learning.

Percentage increase of attendance at schools with new classrooms and WASH facilities.

Output and target dates

- 212 Ethnic Teacher scholars are deployed and receive induction support in targeted schools by September 2018
- 124 Ethnic Teacher graduates are deployed in targeted schools by September 2019
- 25 Ethnic Teacher graduates are deployed in targeted schools by September 2020
- Evaluation report on deployment of graduates and the effectiveness of the scholarship program by August 2020
- Annual increase in net attendance rates at target schools

Responsibility:

Lead agency – Department of Teacher Education (DTE)

Throughout 2018 to 2020 activities associated with the ETSP will continue. The ETSP was designed to maximise educational opportunities for students in remote communities where Lao is not spoken as a first language. It is anticipated that ethnic teachers, in conjunction with the VEDC, will have a role in convincing parents to send their child to school.

Graduates who understand the language and cultural context of disadvantaged communities are better equipped to teach Lao language strategies to non-Lao speakers. BEQUAL will support and monitor the program to ensure that by the end of Phase 1 graduates are deployed to disadvantaged areas and are equipped to teach the new primary curriculum. ETSP induction program will address issues of safety where there is a power imbalance between mentor and mentee.

Tasks

1. Monitor and support ETSP training

- a) Develop a plan to monitor TTC delivery of 9+3 and 12+4, TTC delivery of supplementary training and TTC delivery of student practicum
- b) Complete an evaluation report with recommendations for future programs

2. Trial ESGs for ETSP induction program

- a) Monitor trial in Semester 1, 2018–19
- b) Consolidate learning and transfer to counterparts and key activities

Complete ETSP infrastructure upgrades with integrated WASH training

- a) Classroom construction completed in 168 schools by March 2019
- b) Water supply construction completed in 129 schools by March 2019
- c) WASH training completed by March 2019²⁴

6 Strengthening Planning, Management, Support and Monitoring of Teaching

The BEQUAL program will support MoES strategies and initiatives, particularly at the sub-national level to improve policy, planning and coordination that directly influence the quality of teaching.

²⁴ The timing of the training will be embedded into MoES WASH training activities; activities may not have been completed by March, however, the grant will have been disbursed.

The support provided will focus on local governance through the Village Education Development Committees (VEDCs); assistance to strengthen and standardise financial management and accounting for education, with a specific focus on grant management, and strengthening M&E which will be integral to the program over the remainder of phase 1.

6.1 Strengthen village-level governance

Intended outcomes (3.1): Selected VEDCs²⁵ in targeted districts take leading roles in activities that support teachers and to improve learning

Schools use planning and management systems that ensure VEDC involvement in activities that support teachers

Key performance indicator: A scalable Local Governance Improvement Program is endorsed for funding support in Phase 2.

Piloted schools use planning and management systems that ensure VEDC involvement in activities that support teachers

Outputs and targets

- A desk study on entry points for VEDCs to support teachers by April 2019 with a focus on female participation and support for children with disability
- 6 villages are engaged in a pilot program to improve Local Governance and work with VEDCs by September 2019
- A scalable Local Governance Improvement Program proposal for supporting teachers is developed by April 2020.

Responsibility: Lead agency – Institute for Education Administration Development (IFEAD) and relevant PESS and DESB

VEDCs are an important educational partner at the school level. Community and family members are critical influencers regarding a child's participation and involvement in the education process as well as providing support to teachers teaching the new curriculum. Communities can also influence educational practices at the school and classroom level.

BEQUAL will support raising awareness of VEDCs for the new curriculum through PAs and DESBs monitoring the teaching environment and implementation of the new curriculum.

Tasks

1. Document local governance systems

- a) Using a selection of DESBs and VEDCs, document the current processes and gaps in governance at the local level. Differentiate between informal and formal approaches to good governance.

²⁵ An initial desk study will be carried out to inform the selection process for VEDCs to be included in this activity

- b) Document results to inform the development of a pilot program to improve collaboration and coordination between VEDCs and schools and support mechanisms for teachers with a focus on female participation and VEDC support for children with disability.

2. Trial an approach to improving local governance to support teaching

3. Assess findings, lessons and recommendations from BEIF and BNC

- a) Review monitoring reports and identify relevant information.
- b) Adopt or adapt approaches or materials.

4. Based on the trial and other findings, prepare a program for improving local governance for supporting teaching through VEDCs

6.2 Strengthen public financial management (PFM) for education

Intended outcomes (3.2): PESS and DESB have increased capacity to manage and administer finances and ESGs

Key performance indicator: PESS and DESB are using a standardised financial management and accounting processes to manage and report finances.
Up to two provincial education budgets assessed for their sensitivity on gender equality and inclusion

Outputs and target dates:

- Grant management guidelines (December 2018)
- Financial management and accounting manual and training materials. (March 2019)
- PESS staff trained in financial management and accounting. (May 2019)
- Analysis of the impact of the education budget allocation on gender equality and inclusion (January 2020)

Responsibility: Lead agency – Department of Finance

In order to manage grant funding from BEQUAL all grantees will need to undergo financial management training to ensure they use funds appropriately and account for the use of funds appropriately. BEQUAL will work with DOF to support basic financial management training and the preparation of a financial management and accounting manual.

Tasks

1. Grant management guidelines developed and distributed as part of the ESG program

2. Financial management and accounting system established

- a) Financial management and accounting manual prepared and training modules designed.
- b) PESS and DESB staff trained in financial management and accounting with an emphasis on managing ESGs.

6.3 Strengthen the MoES M&E Network

Intended outcomes (3.3): MoES, PESS and DESB have increased capacity for monitoring and managing in-service teacher training and curriculum implementation

Key performance indicators:

MoES, PESS and DESB have access to an up to date in-service database to monitor teacher development by August 2020

Number of staff actively engaged in the M&E community of practice (by department)

MoES, PESS and DESB participate effectively in Review and Reflection Workshops to implement Lessons Learned for inservice teacher training and curriculum implementation

MoES, PESS and DESB have access to timely information, advice and feedback allowing informed decision-making

Outputs and target dates:

- MEL Network has active participation across MoES by March 2019
- MoES develops monitoring and evaluation capacity at the national, provincial and local levels to support the new primary curriculum implementation.

Responsibility:

Lead agencies – Department of Inspection (DoI)

Monitoring and evaluation of the new primary curriculum implementation and teacher training will be critical over the next 20 months at the national, provincial and district levels. This implementation process will be an opportunity to learn and enhance the process for grades 3-5 between 2021 and 2023. An investment in MEL during this phase will minimise risks going into Phase 2.

MEL will cover all aspects of implementation, including the impact of GEDSI strategy implementation throughout all curriculum materials and teaching. It will be important to carefully design and assess pilot projects to inform scale up across a range of initiatives. It will include monitoring the effective use of ESGs.

Tasks

- 1. Identify MoES systems for monitoring and evaluation of targeted policy initiatives**
 - a) Document current systems and undertake verification and interviews with stakeholders.
 - b) Develop a plan for strengthening existing systems and contribute to the overall M&E framework.
- 2. Embed the national primary teaching standards in MoES systems for project monitoring, education inspection and teacher performance appraisal**
- 3. Establish and support an M&E community of practice reflecting on and supporting better teaching**
- 4. Assess findings, lessons and recommendations from BEIF and BNC**
 - a) Review monitoring reports and identify relevant information.
 - b) Adopt or adapt approaches or materials.

7 Management

7.1 Organisational Restructure

As a result of the recommendations in the MTR and the changes in the program logic, BEQUAL reviewed and aligned its organisational structure to meet the resource requirements under the new delivery strategy. The new structure was developed following the principles of ‘form follows

function' with a focus on establishing clear roles between the two design teams (curriculum development, teacher education) and strengthening the sub-national teams for the increased workloads with monitoring of the curriculum implementation. Additional roles were created across the three teams to increase efficiency and effectiveness of BEQUAL activities. Discussions about a proposed new structure commenced in July with team consultations in August and September and DFAT 'no objection' in early October. As a result of the new structure, a few positions were abolished, some positions were adjusted, and a few new positions were created, mainly to support the sub-national level, but also to strengthen BEQUAL's inclusive education approach.²⁶ While no major changes in the organisational structure are expected, it is important for BEQUAL to have sufficient flexibility in shifting resources and funding to address resource emergencies and emerging resource challenges.

7.2 Operations

Personnel

As a result of the organisation review and restructure an additional full-time resource will be added to support human resource management. 14 staff, 3 of which are located provincially will manage the finance, administration, logistic, human resource and information technology functions of BEQUAL. No further resourcing increases are expected due to the activity shift from scholarship, grant and Vientiane based workshop/training management to an oversight and support focus to the curriculum implementation support activity.

Finance

Financial management remains a challenging support function due to multiple donor reporting requirements, geographically dispersed activities and a large amount of scholarships and grants. Systems and processes have been developed to operate at scale, leveraging technology to track disbursements and ensure complete and accurate records are maintained. The value of this ability to monitor advances for activities and grant payments will only increase as the curriculum implementation support activity begins. Activities at provincial and district level will increase and the monitoring and assurance role of the operations team will be central to the integrity of BEQUAL's financial management.

Administration (systems)

Online system development remains a key tool to enable large amounts of data and information to be managed efficiently to ensure key program activities are not delayed or adversely impacted. Personnel, travel, sub-contractors, scholarships, grants and activity timelines have been integrated into online tools that can be accessed by staff at any time. New tools will be developed for the curriculum implementation support activity to give technical staff the tools required to deliver BEQUAL's outcomes.

8 Risk Assessment and Mitigation

The current risks and suggested mitigation measures are in Annex 1. Major risks and suggested mitigation measures are:

1. **Risk:** There is no strategy in MoES to manage the increase in resources needed to implement the new curriculum in parallel to existing functions.

Mitigation: BEQUAL will work with senior MoES officials to address support and resource mobilisation. This will be led by MoES with BEQUAL support.

²⁶ Refer to the draft of the revised Inclusive Education (formerly GEDSI) Strategy, October 2018

2. **Risk:** There are not enough dedicated curriculum writers to complete the materials within the time frame given the slow pace of writing.
Mitigation: BEQUAL will work closely with MoES to monitor work loads and progress. If writing gets behind schedule, then external resources will be brought in to assist in order to meet the deadlines.
3. **Risk:** New primary curriculum materials are not able to be fully distributed to schools before the start of the school year.
Mitigation: A commercial contract will be used to organise delivery systems across the country to schools. BEQUAL will ensure sufficient time for delivery to difficult locations and monitor the delivery schedules and receipts.
4. **Risk:** Teachers have no incentive to use the new curriculum and revert to the old curriculum and way of teaching. They find it difficult to adapt to the new curriculum.
Mitigation: Use on-going communication to create momentum and support for the new curriculum amongst teachers and identify local champions such as the Governor or Vice-Governor to be the face of the new curriculum to promote its benefits. Work with the VEDC to reinforce these messages.
5. **Risk:** Foundation in-service training is found to be insufficient for most teachers to teach using the new primary curriculum materials
Mitigation: Provided funding is available, additional support is provided throughout the semester (through-semester training) based on initial trials to evaluate the level of additional support required.
6. **Risk:** Teachers are not available for training in July and August 2019 for up to six days of training due to other commitments.
Mitigation: BEQUAL will coordinate with MoES and other DPs to align/ prevent overlapping with other workshops. support and encourage teachers to use the new curriculum.
7. **Risk:** Misuse of ESG funds for example, PESS and DESB offices lacking sufficient funding to undertake regular work duties utilise ESG funds for other duties, or interpret and apply the MoES decree for travelling allowances differently, resulting in different and ineligible amounts being paid.
Mitigation: BEQUAL will make ESG payments in tranches based on evidence of work completed. Monitoring visits and spots checks will be carried out to verify supporting documentation. Data about school visits undertaken will be verified with beneficiaries and regular meetings will be held with ESG recipients to collect targeted information and respond quickly to any challenges being experienced with data collection or school monitoring.

9 Implementation Schedule

Table 2 Schedule of key activities for Phase 1

	2018			2019				2020		
	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3
Curriculum										
Curriculum Framework	CACIM Endorsement									
Grade 1 Texts and Teacher Guides		Drafting, Printing and Distribution								
Resource and Language Packs		Procurement and Distribution								
Grade 2 Texts and Teacher Guides			Drafting				Printing and Distribution			
Teacher Education										
Grade 1 In-service		Materials Preparation		Grants and Training						
Grade 2 In-service					Materials Preparation			Grants and Training		
Pre-Service Curriculum	Framework and Scope			Year Drafting and Piloting			In-service			
PDP	Training Cycle 4			Training Cycle 5			Training Cycle 6			
ETSP	Cohort 1		Cohort 2 (9+3)				Cohort 3 (12+4)			
Planning management, support and monitoring of teaching										
ASLO		ASLO 3		Possible ASLO						
Finance Training & TIMS	Basic Training		Advanced plus TIMs							
ETSP aligned infrastructure	Batch 1		Batch 2							
BEIF – ongoing commitment	Ongoing Implementation			Final Evaluation and Upscaling if Appropriate						
BNC – ongoing commitment		Final Evaluation								
Curriculum MEL		Scope		Progressive Research/Evaluation plus Learning						
PESS Grants (ESGs)	Scope	Teacher Induction				Grade 1 In-Service			Grade 1 In-Service	
DESB Grants (ESGs)	Target Scope			Targeted Support: Curriculum, VEDC, Mentoring, Other						

Annex 1 - Risk Management Matrix

Risk	Related Assumption	Impact	Probability			Risk Mitigating Action / Treatment Strategies	Residual Risk Rating after Treatment			Risk Treatment Owner
			L	C	R		L	C	R	
Management and coordination										
There is a lack of broad public and institutional acceptance for the primary curriculum change	There is widespread acceptance of the need to improve teaching and learning in schools	Public and institutional resistance to the implementation of the new primary curriculum impacts on effective implementation.	4	4	E	BEQUAL and MoES will implement a communications strategy in support of the new primary curriculum to build public and institutional support for the change. This will include working at the local level with principals and VEDCs, as well as PESS and DESB's. DFAT will be required to assist with communication about the new curriculum at high level events and meetings with GoL partners and DPs.	3	4	H	Team Leader Communications Manager DFAT
Roles and responsibilities for BEQUAL supported activities in MoES are not clear, especially for in-service and pre-service teacher training.	Coordination and collaboration continues to improve in MoES across key departments such as RIES, DTE, IEC, DGE, IFEAD and DoF to support and implement the national primary curriculum. There is continued coordination at the	Support and materials provided by BEQUAL cannot be agreed across MoES and implementation of curriculum implementation support is delayed.	4	4	E	BEQUAL works with the relevant departments and DoP to encourage MoES to resolve the issues. In the meantime, BEQUAL works with the department that takes most interest in the relevant issue and tries to achieve agreement.	3	4	H	Team Leader Teacher Education Manager
There is no coordination team in MoES to manage training, capacity development and	national primary curriculum. There is continued coordination at the	The program becomes inefficient and ineffective. Resources are not mobilised when needed.	4	4	E	BEQUAL will work with MoES to plan and schedule in advance to optimise the availability of resources for training and capacity development and curriculum implementation	3	4	H	Team Leader

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R = Risk level (combination of above 2 assessments) (**L** = Low, **M** = Medium, **H** = High, **E** = Extreme)

Risk	Related Assumption	Impact	Probability			Risk Mitigating Action / Treatment Strategies	Residual Risk Rating after Treatment			Risk Treatment Owner
			L	C	R		L	C	R	
resource mobilisation to support curriculum implementation across relevant departments	provincial and district levels.									
BEQUAL resources are stretched to provide the required capacity building and delivery support for meeting tight deadlines for curriculum development and curriculum implementation		The new primary curriculum and the new teacher training curriculum are not meeting quality standards or approval time frames (CACIM) and implementation time frames cannot be met so that the curriculum materials are not ready for implementation year after year.	3	4	H	BEQUAL will monitor resources and work loads and seek approval for flexible resourcing mechanisms, as required.	2	4	M	Team Leader Deputy Team Leader
PESS and DESB in targeted locations do not have the time, motivation and capacity to support the full implementation of the curriculum within the timeframe, including managing the	Teacher education (pre-service and in-service) activities are carried out in coordination with new primary curriculum materials development. There is strong and genuine interaction	Implementation in targeted locations is hampered by inadequate resourcing and commitment. Grants are ineffective.	4	4	E	BEQUAL will work with MoES to monitor PESS and DESB activities and provide support where needed to keep the program on track. Extensive support will be provided to support grant management.	3	4	H	Regional Delivery and Grant Manager

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			L	C	R		L	C	R	
Education Support Grants (ESGs) and will not take on the additional workloads.	between teacher education entities (TTCs, TDCs and DTE) and primary education partners (DPPE, RIES, PESS, DESB and schools)									
There is a lack of coordination amongst development partners for implementation activities		Gaps and duplication of effort. The ability to work together on common objectives is diminished. Misalignment of curriculum materials and implementation activities. Stretching MoES counterparts too thin through too many workshops at the same time.	4	4	E	BEQUAL management and team members will meet formally and informally with development partners to identify synergies and areas for cooperation and support. DFAT will be requested to assist with coordination as required.	3	4	H	Team Leader DFAT
The phase out of school infrastructure activities in March 2019 leads to requests by MoES districts to provide funding for		Schools are not maintained and begin to deteriorate leading to longer term costs. Previous investments in schools and facilities are diminished.	4	3	H	Ensure clear messages from BEQUAL and DFAT on the completion of support.. Consider conducting local hand-over ceremonies which clearly mark the end of BEQUAL’s responsibilities. Discussions with DoF about providing funding for maintenance.	3	3	M	Team Leader DFAT

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			L	C	R		L	C	R	
maintenance for these schools and nearby schools in targeted districts during the remaining period of Phase 1 (up to Aug 2020).										
Developing and delivery of a new national primary curriculum										
There are not enough dedicated curriculum writers with the required skills (or potential to develop those skills) to complete the materials within the time frame given the slow pace of writing		The curriculum materials are not prepared in time for the school year or external consultants develop the materials and do not build MoES capacity.	4	4	E	BEQUAL will work closely with MoES to monitor work loads and progress. If writing gets behind schedule, then external resources will be brought in to assist in order to meet the deadlines.	3	4	H	Curriculum Manager
New primary curriculum materials are not able to be fully distributed to schools before the		Schools do not have the new primary curriculum materials in time to teach. They revert back to the old curriculum and need to catch up	4	4	E	A commercial contract will be used to organise delivery systems across the country to schools. BEQUAL will ensure sufficient time for delivery to difficult locations and monitor the delivery schedules and receipts.	3	4	H	Curriculum Manager

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			L	C	R		L	C	R	
start of the school year.		when the materials arrive.								
Improving teacher education										
MoES have insufficient resources for full implementation of the new primary curriculum and teacher training, particularly face to face in service training.		Teachers do not receive adequate training to teach using the new primary curriculum materials.	5	4	E	The implementation of grade 1 will be evaluated to assess the resources required for an effective implementation. If resources are insufficient, BEQUAL will work with MoES to develop a resourcing strategy.	4	4	E	Regional Delivery and Grants Manager MEL Manager
There are insufficient suitable numbers of master trainers and provincial trainers		Teachers do not receive adequate training to teach using the new primary curriculum materials	4	4	H	Selection criteria are embedded in the MoES led selection process. BEQUAL will work with MoES to help identify suitable team members.	3	4	M	Teacher Education Manager
Teachers have no incentive to use the new curriculum and revert back to the old curriculum and way of teaching. They find it difficult to adapt to the new curriculum.	New curriculum materials being developed are fit for purpose and take into account the current capabilities of teachers.	Students are not taught using the new curriculum materials and are at a disadvantage compared to those teachers that are using the new materials.	5	4	E	Use on-going communication to create momentum and support for the new curriculum amongst teachers and identify local champions such as the Governor or Vice-Governor to be the face of the new curriculum to promote its benefits. Work with the VEDC to reinforce these messages.	4	4	E	Teacher Education Manager Communication Manager Team Leader

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			L	C	R		L	C	R	
	Teacher education (pre-service and in-service) activities are carried out in coordination with new primary curriculum materials development. There is strong and genuine interaction between teacher education entities (TTCs, TDCs and DTE) and primary education partners (DPPE, RIES, PESS, DESB and schools)					Work with DTE on their teacher performance policy. Create incentives for teachers to use the new curriculum.				
The foundation package of in-service training is found to be insufficient for most teachers to teach using the new primary curriculum materials		Teachers struggle to teach the new primary curriculum and revert to old materials and methods.	4	4	E	For targeted districts, additional support is provided throughout the semester (through-semester training) based on initial trials to evaluate the level of additional support required. A suite of materials is developed to enable self directed learning and support Communities of Practice, in addition to face to face inservice training. Discussions with DoF about MoES providing additional funding.	3	4	E	Teacher Education Manager Regional Delivery and Grants Manager
Provinces outside of BEQUAL's target districts do not provide additional support/funding for additional support packages provided, but not funded, by BEQUAL.	Over time, the MoES will provide resources to implement the curriculum in areas not directly supported by BEQUAL.	The new curriculum is based on a certain level of in-service training. If it is not provided teachers will not be able to adapt and use the new curriculum materials.	4	4	E	BEQUAL will develop training material that is accessible without face to face activities. Education Support Grants at provincial level will be monitored to assess usage for in-service training. Discussions with DoF about providing additional funding to non-target provinces.	3	4	E	Regional Delivery and Grants Manager Team Leader

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			L	C	R		L	C	R	
Teachers will need additional help from BEQUAL to implement the new maths curriculum materials		BEQUAL will not have resources to provide all the assistance required. Teachers will become frustrated with the changes and revert to using old curriculum materials.	3	3	H	BEQUAL and MoES will monitor the impact of the new Maths curriculum materials on teachers as it is implemented. Additional support will be requested if required to support the maths curriculum implementation.	2	3	M	Regional Delivery and Grants Manager
The in-service professional database for teacher development is not developed further by UNESCO		Tracking of teacher training will not be possible. Gaps or duplication of effort may result.	4	3	H	Follow up meetings with UNESCO and support from DFAT will be sought to emphasise the need for the database. As a back-up plan, BEQUAL will assist MoES in developing a simpler spreadsheet system using Excel to track in-service teacher training provided resources are available.	3	3	H	Teacher Education Manager
Strengthening planning, management, support and monitoring of teaching										
Baseline data is not adequately collected and documented for the next phase of the program to report on progress.	MoES is committed to undertaking monitoring, evaluation and research to support the ongoing implementation of the new national primary curriculum	Progress will not be able to be measured adequately. BEQUAL will not be able to communicate achievements to key stakeholders resulting in a lack of ongoing support.	3	3	H	BEQUAL will develop guides for capturing baseline data to support the program over the next 2 years. Data will be collected during October/November 2018. The comprehensive M&E framework developed with support from BEQUAL will provide guidance on collecting baseline data across MoES to track curriculum implementation.	2	3	M	MEL Manager

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The M&E network lacks a cohesive framework with competing interests across MoES. Roles and responsibilities are not clearly defined for monitoring, evaluation and research between DoI and RIES and other parts of MoES.		MoES is unable to monitor and evaluate the implementation and effectiveness of the new curriculum from Ministry perspective.	4	3	H	BEQUAL will work with MoES to develop a comprehensive M&E framework to ensure monitoring, evaluation and research is coordinated to meet the needs of decision makers as the curriculum is being implemented.	3	3	H	MEL Manager

Risk Matrix			Impact				
Rating	Likelihood of the Risk Arising	Probability	Low	Moderate	High	Very High	Extreme
5	Almost certain to happen; would be surprising if it did not happen	> 91%	5	10	15	20	25
			MEDIUM	HIGH	HIGH	EXTREME	EXTREME
4	High likelihood of the risk happening - has occurred recently in a similar scenario	76% – 90%	4	8	12	16	20
			LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH	EXTREME	EXTREME
3	Probably could happen - more likely to happen than not	51% – 75%	3	6	9	12	15
			LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH	HIGH	HIGH
2	Likely to happen but would be surprised if it did happen	26% – 50%	2	4	6	8	10
			LOW	LOW	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	HIGH
1	Could happen but it is considered unlikely	0% – 25%	1	2	3	4	5
			LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW	MEDIUM

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