

# **REPORT**

## **Rapid Assessment of Access to Education in Project Locations of An Giang Province**

### **I. INTRODUCTION:**

#### **1.1 Overview of Project “Technical Support for Enhancing the National Capacity to Prevent and Reduce Child Labor in Viet Nam”**

Child labor is prevalent in many countries, including Vietnam. In the past decade, the world has witnessed remarkable progress in the reduction of child labor. However, child labor still exists in various forms that are most difficult to reach, including that in the informal sector where there is a lack of monitoring and law enforcement. Child labor results in negative impacts on the physical and mental health of the affected children, depriving them of their childhood, opportunities for education, development and dignity. In the longer term, child labor will undermine the future labor force and national development. Although Vietnam has recorded significant achievements in reducing and preventing child labor in recent years, the 2012 National Child Labor Survey indicates that there are about 1.75 million children engaging in child labor.

With financial support from the US Department of Labor (USDOL), the International Labor Organization (ILO) is currently collaborating with the Ministry of Labor, Invalids and Social Affairs (MOLISA) in implementing a project entitled “Technical Support for Enhancing the National Capacity to Prevent and Reduce Child Labor in Viet Nam” (the ENHANCE Project). The overall objective of this project is to “develop and strengthen comprehensive and effective multi-stakeholder efforts to prevent and reduce child labor in Vietnam” between 2015 and 2019.

According to project documents, key interventions include: i) appropriate education support for children aged 15-17; ii) vocational training support for children aged 15-17, and iii) sustainable livelihood and employment support to children aged 15-17 and family members.

The Project is carried out in 3 provinces, namely Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh City and An Giang Province. Project locations in An Giang include the following 4 districts and 9 communes:

Chau Doc City:	Nui Sam Ward & Chau Phu A Ward
Chau Phu District:	Khanh Hoa Commune & My Phu Commune
An Phu District:	Phu Huu Commune & Nhon Hoi Commune
Cho Moi District:	Tan My Commune, An Thanh Trung Commune & My An Commune

The Project collaborates with partners in the education sector in providing support to the target groups, including school children or children at risk of dropping out of school due to weak academic performance, disadvantaged household conditions, or other reasons. This support helps them continue to attend school, return to school or attend continuing education centers, by means of referral or on-site support at educational facilities. In the case of dropouts, the Project will help with connections and refer them to vocational training facilities, depending upon their needs and available resources.

The Project will conduct a separate assessment on the need for vocational training services, analysis of job market demand and capacity of vocational training facilities. This rapid assessment therefore focuses only on academic education (or basic education).

## 1.2 Project Beneficiaries

According to project documents, child beneficiaries include child laborers or children at risk of child labor in 9 communes of 4 districts identified by the Project. Specific interventions for these groups are listed in the table below:

**Table 1: Project's Child Beneficiaries**

Forms of Intervention	Children aged 5-14					Children aged 15-17 (legal working age)		
	Currently working and...			Currently not working and...		Currently working in hazardous conditions and...		
	already dropping out of school	attending regular education	attending non-regular education	not attending school	attending school but at risk of child labor	not attending school	attending regular education	attending non-regular education
Removal	x	x	x			x	x	x
Protection						x	x	x
Prevention				x	x			

Source: ENHANCE Project Documents, MOLISA, 2015

As such, the child beneficiaries of educational support are those in the 5-17 age group, which is also the age of schooling for all levels of education (kindergarten, primary, lower secondary, upper secondary and vocational). Considering the remarkable achievements in the universalization of primary education across the country and in An Giang Province (very low drop-out rate in the entire province and project communes<sup>1</sup>), the primary target groups of the Project may be those who are in the secondary education.

The child beneficiaries of the Project's education support are divided in two groups as follows:

The first group includes children already dropping out of lower secondary, upper secondary or vocational education, regardless of whether they are working or not. The educational support offered by the Project will help them return to school at least until they complete lower secondary education or reach full 15 years of age (the minimum legal working age according to Vietnamese labour laws). Those dropping out after completing lower secondary education and working in hazardous conditions will be referred to vocational training facilities or career counselling services and equipped with skills required for transitioning from school to the workplace.

<sup>1</sup> As per An Giang Provincial DOET's Report on Universalization of Primary Education, the drop-out rate is 0.41%.

The second group includes children currently attending school but at risk of dropping out (due to various reasons). As it is a great challenge for both the Project and local partners to locate, identify and provide effective educational support to those already dropping out of school, the target for support in the Project will therefore prioritize the second group. As such, this assessment will identify and analyse in detail the reasons for dropping out/absence from school, and provide suitable recommendations accordingly.

### **1.3 Objectives, Methodology, Scope and Limitations**

#### **1.3.1 Objectives:**

This quick assessment of access to education aims at the following objectives:

- (1) To understand issues related to the education accessibility for primary and secondary school children in project locations in An Giang province;
- (2) To map out all educational service providers (including regular, non-regular, public and private institutions) to children of primary and secondary school age in project locations;
- (3) To propose concrete educational service packages suitable to project locations and methods by which the ILO/the ENHANCE Project collaborates with partners in the education sector to improve education accessibility and quality, and facilitate the transition from school to the workplace for the target child beneficiaries.

#### **1.3.2 Methodology:**

The assessment combines both qualitative and quantitative measures, of which the former plays a key role and the latter as a supplement to the former.

The following tools and techniques were employed for primary and secondary data collection and analysis:

- Secondary data was collected via literature review to provide an overview of education accessibility for the target child beneficiaries and to initially identify factors likely to influence accessibility. The documents examined include: policy instruments/programs/initiatives related to education, issued by central or local governments; social and economic development reports of the province and the Projects' 4 districts and 9 communes; and reports on education and training provided by the provincial and district DOETs.
- Primary data was collected within 1 week of field visits to 9 project communes, during which the following data collection tools and techniques were used:
  - A questionnaire was developed and sent to heads of the schools in project locations (including primary, lower secondary, upper secondary and continuing education facilities), including questions on physical facilities, students' academic performance, teachers' training capacity, supporting roles of parents' associations/ associations for encouragement of learning/ state authorities, and the needs for support from the Project. In total, 33 copies of the questionnaire were sent to the managerial boards of primary, lower secondary and upper secondary schools in project locations, then completed and returned to the survey team.
  - 23 in-depth interviews were conducted with the vice chairpersons in charge of cultural and social affairs in 9 project communes; 9 heads and vice heads of lower secondary schools; 4 heads and vice heads of primary schools; and 1 provincial DOET staff.
  - 18 group discussions were conducted, including with 9 groups of parents (each consisting of

- 6-8 people) and 9 groups of students (currently attending school or already dropping out).
- Mapping out of educational service providers: 9 maps of project communes including locations of schools.
- Visits to schools for observation of teaching and learning environment: 11 visits to primary and lower secondary schools in project areas provided opportunities for the evaluation team to witness with their own eyes the physical facilities of the schools and their teaching and learning environment.

### **1.3.3 Data Processing:**

Data provided via the questionnaire was validated (if necessary) and entered into Excel tables prior to processing and analysis. Data collected via in-depth interviews, group discussions, and observation notes was manually processed by key topics of assessment for analysis and reporting. Maps of educational service providers for each commune were established based on the existing geographical maps obtained from the website of An Giang PPC (<http://www.angiang.gov.vn/wps/portal>).

### **1.3.4 Scope:**

This rapid assessment was carried out in project locations of An Giang province, including 9 communes in 4 districts: Cho Moi, Chau Phu, An Phu and Chau Doc City.

### **1.3.5 Research Ethics:**

All personal information and data of the respondents involved in the survey shall be used only for the purpose of the project. In all cases, ILO code of ethics and detailed guidelines of the project shall be strictly complied by all members of the study team. Culturally sensitive elements shall be taken into account in the design of survey questionnaires and other data collection tools, in order to avoid psychological or physical vulnerabilities which might realize should the respondents be forced to provide answers to questions that are considered inappropriate.

### **1.3.6 Limitations:**

Listed below are several limitation of the assessment:

- Due to several reasons (such as the need to fulfil the targets of the New Rural Development Program or Cultivated Commune) and the exclusion of students who have left for other areas, the officially reported number of school dropouts is often lower than the actual figure. The survey team tried to address this limitation by asking for the actual figure of dropouts during the school year from local schools. As such, data on dropout rates may not be consistent between the two sources.
- Participants to the group discussions include primarily students and parents from poor, near poor and disadvantaged households, and students already dropping out or at risk of dropping out. Therefore, the viewpoints presented in the report should not be considered representative of all groups (for example, students performing better academically or from better-off families), but only of the groups mentioned above.

## II. SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CONTEXT, AND OVERVIEW OF EDUCATION ACCESSIBILITY

### 2.1 Social and Economic Context in Project Areas:

An Giang province is located to the upstream area of Cuu Long River (where the Mekong flows into Vietnam), hence every year it is affected by flood water and rural infrastructure is often damaged in flood season. Travelling in rainy and flood season is also made difficult, especially in the low lying areas along Tien River and Hau River. There are 2 cities in the province, namely Long Xuyen and Chau Doc, 1 town and 8 districts. There are 156 commune-level administrative units, including 30 in disadvantaged communes.

In terms ethnic composition, there are 4 ethnic groups in the province (Kinh, Khmer, Cham and Hoa), each of which carrying their own cultural essence. Kinh is the largest group in terms of population, representing 94,83% of total provincial regulation.

In terms of economic structure, An Giang province primarily relies on agricultural production. However, in recent years the province has been experiencing a shift toward industrial production, trade and services. In addition, remarkable progresses have been made in improving infrastructure, cultural and social conditions, access to information and communication services and standards of living. Albeit the significant improvements, there remain 6.9% poor households<sup>2</sup>. The ENHANCE Project selected 9 communes from 4 districts in the province, namely Cho Moi, Chau Phu, An Phu and Chau Doc City as project locations.

According to 2016 social and economic development reports (SEDR, provided by the communes) and results of in-depth interviews with vice chairmen of the 9 communes, 7 out of 9 are rural/agricultural communes which encounter multiple difficulties in economic development. This is especially the case for border communes of An Phu District, where there is very little or hardly any investment in industrial and small-industrial production facilities. Nhon Hoi and Phu Huu communes of An Phu District are poor and particularly disadvantaged, with highest poverty rates in the entire province. Per capita GDP of at least 3 out of 9 communes is still low compared to the average level in the province (VND 33.986 mil. in 2016<sup>3</sup>). See Table 1 below for details.

**Table 1: Overview of Social and Economic Conditions of Project Communes in 2016**

No	Commune/District	No. of Households	% of Poor Households	% of Near Poor Households	% of Disadvantaged Households	2016 Per Capita GDP
1	My An, Cho Moi	3200/ 13,300 people	4.03	6.09	10	33 VND million
2	Tan My, Cho Moi	4824/ 21,662 people	4.3% (208 households)	24 % 115 households	7.25% 350 households	>34.4 VND million
3	An Thạnh Trung, Cho Moi		5.64% (270 households)	3.47% (207 households)	> 100 households	36 VND million
4	Khanh Hoa, Chau Phu	6054/26,000 people	2.73%	N/A	N/A	>39 VND million

<sup>2</sup> According to the new poverty line (multi-dimensional) and as per 2016 PPC SEDR.

<sup>3</sup> 2016 SEDR for An Giang Province. Source: <http://media.angiang.gov.vn/BaocaoKTXH/2017/BC-630-UBND-tinh-KTXH-2016.pdf>

		(Cham: 264 households and 1000 people)				
5	My Phu, Chau Phu	5085/ > 22,000 people	7.95	8.04	N/A	35 VND million VND
6	Nhon Hoi, An Phu	3238 households/ 13,445 people Cham:444 households /1955	19.33% 626 households	7.9% 256 households	N/A	N/A
7	Phu Huu, An Phu	4638 households/ nearly 19,000 people	25.9% 1203 households	9.6% 444 households	N/A	14.5 VND million
8	Nui Sam, Chau Doc	5501 households/ >21,000 people	1.81% 100 households	5.19% 286 households	>3.63% >200 households	N/A
9	Chau Phu A, Chau Doc	6757 households/ 26,739 people	>1% 70 households	1.42% 96 households	N/A	N/A

Source: SEDRs provided by the communes and data collected via in-depth interviews.

All of the project communes advised that they are now experiencing shifts in crop structure, whereby cultivation areas for the traditional paddy rice has been reduced and replaced with other cash crops. In particular, in the case of Cho Moi and Chau Phu communes, this is the direct result of low selling price for rice, although yield is relatively high. Instead, these communes are focusing on cash crops such as baby corn (in combination with raising cows), soybean vegetable, fruit-vegetables (bitter melon, capsicum, okra, etc.). Catfish (basa) farming areas have also been cut back and replaced with mullet or silurus.

A prominent socio-economic feature of all 9 communes is a serious shortage of jobs and employment, forcing thousands of local workers to migrate to large cities to make a living. The vast majority of these workers are in the age group of 30-40. There are communes with 1/3 of their total workforce migrating for jobs (e.g.: Khanh Hoa Commune, Chau Phu District or Phu Huu Commune of An Phu District (40%)). The peak time for migration is after the Tet holiday. *“Every occasion after Tet holiday, our CPC has to appoint 5 staff just to sign off on job applications of local people, all day long, in 3-4 days on end”*, said one commune leader in an in-depth interview. The primary reason for labor migration was said to be the lack of good job opportunities in the local areas. According to 2016 SEDRs provided by the 9 project communes, agriculture and rice/cash crop is still the main economic activity. However, due to increasing mechanization in all phases of cultivation (tillage, irrigation, tending and harvesting), job opportunities for hired farm hands have declined significantly. The most common view shared by many parents in in-depth interviews is *“My household has none or very little productive land and hence we have to work primarily as hired farm hands for a living. In the last 3 years, most of the work involved in ploughing, sowing or harvesting rice has been done by machines. There is no longer a need for farm hands and younger family members have to relocate to cities for jobs”*.

Of the 9 project communes, Nui Sam and Chau Phu A wards of Chau Doc City have several potentials for tourism. In particular, Nui Sam Ward is famous for Ba Chua Xu Temple and spiritual tourism, while Chau Phu A Ward is located around the city central market. Unlike the above-mentioned 7 rural/agricultural communes, these 2 wards have great advantages in terms of trade, services and tourism development. According to the vice chairpersons of the 2 wards, their share of income from agricultural production has been declining while that for trade, services and tourism has been increasing rapidly. In particular, during the first quarter of 2017, there are 1.9 million visitors to Ba

Chua Xu Temple (source: [angiang.gov.vn](http://angiang.gov.vn)), contributing to hundreds of billions VND to the local budget. However, rapid urbanization also results in negative consequences, such as increasing social evils or superstitious practices.

## 2.2 Overview of Education Accessibility in Project Areas

### 2.2.1. Overview:

In the past years An Giang Province has recorded promising results in education and training. All 156 communes have been covered with schools of all levels, ranging from kindergarten to secondary education, primarily meeting the objective of universalization. Currently, there are a total of 728 schools of all level (4 crèches, 50 kindergartens (including 16 private facilities), 148 pre-school facilities (including 3 private facilities), 328 primary schools (including 1 private facility), 157 lower secondary schools, 48 upper secondary schools, 3 private upper secondary schools and 12 secondary vocational schools/continuing education centers, 154 community learning centers, 33 vocational training facilities, 1 vocational college; 12 vocational training centers; 1 transport vocational school, 1 health secondary school, and An Giang University as a multi-disciplinary institution.

### 2.2.2. Mobilization of Enrollment, Attendance and Education Performance

i) *Illiteracy eradication*: All 11 districts/towns/cities in the province have been recognized with level 1 illiteracy eradication. In particular: level 2 (92.3%) for 15-25YO, level 2 (86.1%) for 15-15YO, level 2 (75.2%) for 15-60YO.

ii) *Pre-school education*: Mobilization rate for crèches and kindergartens: 54.9%, 5YO pre-school facilities: 99.33%, completion of 5YO pre-schooling: 97.61%

iii) *Primary education*: Mobilization rate of for children of primary schooling age: 99.9%, 6YO entering grade 1: 99.66%, 11 YO completing primary schooling: 89.9%, 11 – 14 YO completing primary schooling: 97.3%

iv) *Lower secondary education*: Mobilization rate for children of lower secondary schooling age: 75%, 15 – 18 YO completing lower secondary schooling: 87.67%, lower secondary education performance: 70.36%; dropout rate: 6.79%.

### 2.2.3. Remaining Issues and Limitations of the Education Sector:

#### \* *Size and Infrastructure*:

Limited network of schools: coverage of kindergartens is still limited, mostly in advantageous locations, few private facilities, and unsatisfactory infrastructure. Several primary school sub-branches have very limited infrastructure. Coverage of lower secondary schools is less than 100% in all commune, focusing mostly on the commune center, forcing students to travel long distances. However, increasing the number of schools may also mean reducing their size, making it difficult for them to invest in the quality of infrastructure, teaching staff and managerial staff. Students in remote rural/agricultural communes located away from upper secondary schools are disadvantaged by the distance of travelling. Vocational facilities offer very few disciplines, are slow in mobilizing social resources, and not attractive enough to students.

Although certain attention has been paid by local governments to improving infrastructure, it is still insufficient to satisfy development needs of the education sector. Quite a few lower and upper secondary schools are lacking rooms for teaching staff and teaching instruments. Subsidies for establishment and initial operation have not been provided to all community learning centers. Infrastructure and IT equipment in many schools are now obsolete in need of replacement.

**\* Mobilization of Enrollment, Attendance and Performance<sup>4</sup>:**

- It is still common for children to enroll or attend primary school after age (9.52% for school year 2016-2017).
- There is a high share of children dropping out of schools, especially at lower secondary level, while it is difficult to persuade them to return to school. This is a barrier undermining the sustainable universalization of education. In particular, dropout rates for students attending primary schooling in the 33 surveyed schools are very low, mostly under 1% (with the exception of Nhon Hoi Primary School at 4.09%). On the contrary, dropout rates for lower secondary school are quite high, with Nhon Hoi LSS at 10.73%, followed by Phu Huu LSS at 8.1% and Khanh Hoa LSS at 6.77%. See Annex 2 on *LSS dropout rates as reported by surveyed schools* (via questionnaire).
- However, the actual dropout rates reported by school managers are higher (due to the inclusion of the students migrating with their family for jobs). For example, the reported rate is 15.76% for Nhon Hoi LSS, 8% for Khanh Hoa LSS, primarily among students at grads 6 and 7).
- Lower secondary students have acquired basic literacy and numerical skills for the daily task and may see it unnecessary to continue studying. Many of them consider learning unimportant, hence it is difficult to ensure full attendance as per the planned class size.
- Improvements have been made in mobilizing children completing primary schooling to continue on to secondary level (grade 6) but results still have fallen short of targets. Training performance for lower secondary level is poor (enrollment rates for grade 6 and graduation rates for grade 9 are unsatisfactory, at 70.36% for school year 2016-2017).

## **2.3 Analysis of policies & supporting resources for education at the national and local levels**

### **2.3.1 Education policies**

For An Giang education sector in particular and the national sector in general, various plans and policies necessary to the development of education for all have been put in place by the Central Party Committee, the Government and local authorities at all (provincial/district/commune) levels.

- ✓ At the national level: plans and instruction documents issued by the Central Party Committee and Prime Minister have paved the foundation/created the legal framework for universalization of preschool, primary and lower secondary education and fundamental and comprehensive reform and education and training. Some typical documents include:
  - Directive 61-CT/TW dated December 28, 2000 by the Politburo;
  - Directive 10-CT/TW dated December 5, 2011 by the Politburo on universalizing preschool education for 5-year-old children, strengthening universalization of primary and lower secondary education, enhancing channeling of students beyond lower secondary education and elimination of adult illiteracy;
  - Decree 88/2001/ND-CP dated November 22, 2001 on universalization of lower secondary education;
  - Resolution 29-NQ/TW dated November 4, 2003 by the 8th Meeting of the 9th Central Party Committee on fundamental and comprehensive reform of education and training; and
  - Decree 20/2014/ND-CP dated March 24, 2014 by the Prime Minister on universal education and elimination of illiteracy.
- ✓ At the district level, authorities also consider education as one of their top priority sectors and various instruction and guiding documents have been promulgated to support implementation of the directives from the national level on universalization of education (refer to the instruction

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<sup>4</sup> Data provided by An Giang DOET

documents at the provincial/district levels in Appendix 3). Furthermore, the documents also focus efforts of local authorities and agencies on reducing drop-out prevalence, performing fundamental and comprehensive reform of education and training, meeting the needs of industrialization and modernization in the context of socialist-oriented market economy and international integration. The education development targets have also been incorporated into 5-year and annual socio-economic development plans at the local level. Moreover, the instruction documents both identify the education sector as the key actor responsible for education but also engage the participation from the authorities, Party Committees, agencies and mass organization. As a result, all agencies and authorities at all levels have been involved in encouraging children's attendance and reducing school skipping/drop-outs.

It is, therefore, obvious that plans, policies and instruction documents have been well and adequately put in place from the national to local levels, however, education in An Giang province has not witnessed any positive development. Many kindergartens, primary schools and lower secondary schools still cannot obtain access to modern equipment and information and technology (such as computers), etc., leading to teachers' inability to introduce information and technology to their teaching practices and students' lack of exposure to education advancements.

### **2.3.2. Supporting resources for education**

Apart from national and local budgets, An Giang education sector has also received substantial funding from socialized sources including social organizations, individuals and corporates. Specifically:

- ✓ From the state budget:
  - Funding from the National Target Program: On an annual basis, the national budget is allocated to An Giang province to provide support to the local education sector such as support for institutions in the mountainous regions (construction of facilities, procurement of school equipment, etc.), universalization of education - elimination of literacy, information and technology training, foreign language projects, etc. During the 2011-2015 period, the province received VND 41 billion per year on average from the national budget; however, in the 2016-2017 school year, the national state budget is also allocated to other Target Programs, the education sector in the province only received VND 5 billion per year on average.
  - Funding from local (province/district) budget for education: These funding sources basically cover the salary payments for staff, civil servants and public employees as well as help maintain the operations of the education sector in the province.
- ✓ Funding from institutional and social sources:
  - *Associations for Promotion of Learning* are established at all four (provincial, district, commune, village and school) levels. The Funds for Promotion of Learning at all levels annually receive in-cash and in-kind support equivalent to VND 15-22 billions. Annually, the Associations for Promotion of Learning at all levels have offered scholarships, financial support and awards to thousands of pupils and students; and carried out programs and projects to support education and training development such as: construction of schools, public housing for teachers, provision of thousands of bicycles to poor pupils who are living far from schools, provision of textbooks and computers free of charge to schools in addition to regular engagement with mass organizations to mobilize enrollment of 6-year-old children in the first grade, encourage dropout pupils to get back to schools, etc. As a result, in 2016, 876 pupils were sponsored in the form of monthly benefits to cover daily and schooling expenses, free medical insurance cards with the total amount of

sponsorship equal to VND 469,073,540 and many other in-kind supports to facilitate their schooling; selection of pupils eligible for learning promotion scholarships and talent scholarships. 47,268 scholarships equivalent to VND 23,628,000,000 were offered; awarding “Making schools closer” gifts to 52,025 pupils with VND 12,802,000,000 spent;

- “For a better tomorrow” scholarship by the Tuoi Tre Newspaper, Scholarship for learning promotion - talent encouragement - students with disabilities by An Giang Lottery, Vu A Dinh scholarship, Doan Toi scholarship, An Giang Talent Support Fund, Charitable Green Program and scholarships for pupils and students in the remote areas offered by the Lawrence, S. Ting Foundation, etc., have exerted positive impacts and offered additional funding for excellent pupils and disadvantaged pupils to cover their learning expenses and inspired them become more determined in learning.
- *Funding from socialized sources*: corporates, donors within and outside the province have made significant contributions to pupils who are performing very well at schools regardless of their disadvantaged circumstances.
- Moreover, education in Chau Doc city has been more advantageous than other localities in the province as it also receives additional funding from the Temple of Sam Mountain Goddess.

Generally, although funding from the state budget and socialized sources has been substantial but insufficient to satisfy the needs of the local education sector. Particularly when it comes to schools in the remote and isolated areas which are not covered in the new rural area roadmap and where there is a constant shortage of facilities, teaching equipment and information and technology (computers), etc.,

### III. FINDINGS FROM THE ASSESSMENT

#### 3.1 Distribution of education services providers in the province:

The mapping of education services providers (ranging from nursery/kindergartens to primary schools, lower secondary schools and upper secondary schools as well as continuing education centers) was incorporated into interviews with heads of communes and school boards and group discussions with pupils and their parents. The school distribution chart by project commune is attached to Appendix 1. In some cases, in which pupils from one commune study at schools located in another adjacent commune, these schools are marked with notes.

Comments on distribution of education services providers in the project area are presented as follows:

- There is a reasonable distribution of schools ranging from nursery/kindergarten to lower secondary schools in 09 project communes where campuses are not located too far away from any village (main campus and satellite campuses). This has enabled almost all pupils to have access to schooling. Along with the formal education system (upper secondary schools), the province has also emphasized continuing education for those who dropped out or could not afford regular upper secondary education to help them obtain access to continuing education. Specifically, the education sector has created favorable conditions for pupils to obtain access to schooling through various forms ranging from regular education to flexible continuing education (such mobilizing dropout pupils or over-age pupils to enroll in inclusive secondary education or open continuing education classes at schools or any locations outside schools and near the places of residence of the groups targeted for universalization of education).
- There are at least 2 out of 9 communes where a large number of pupils are studying in schools

located in adjacent communes (even exceeding the number of pupils studying in their own communes), for example: 700 pupils of Phu Huu commune are now studying in lower secondary schools of the adjacent communes whereas only 500 pupils are studying in Phu Huu Lower Secondary School; or 1,500 pupils from An Thanh Trung/CM commune have enrolled in schools located in other communes/districts). This group of migrating pupils face various deprivations when studying in other communes as they do not receive full support and attention from the local commune authorities because the commune People's Committees and agencies often work with local schools to provide supports to pupils.

- As upper secondary schools are often distributed in the district center (except for two wards of Chau Doc City), pupil in the other 7 communes often have to commute a rather long distance to schools (up to 7-8 kilometers in some locations such as Nhon Hoi or Phu Huu, etc.,) and they face various challenges to get access to schooling (particularly when they have to ride bikes to school in the rain season or use ferries). Therefore, distance to schools was also one of the reasons often quoted by almost all parents and pupils to explain dropouts after lower secondary education.

### **3.2 Economic, cultural and social factors influencing school-age children's access to education in the project area**

The following section highlights influence of economic, cultural and social factors on ability of pupils aged 15 to 17 to obtain access to education in the 9 project communes, with an emphasis on children potentially being the target group of the project.

#### **3.2.1. Factors with Positive Impacts on Access to Education**

***Policies on socio-economic support in general and education support in particular implemented by the State and local authorities (province/district) have contributed to a fall in the dropout rate among children.***

As mentioned in the section on "Education support policies", many policies that provide socio-economic and educational development support are being implemented by the government and local authorities in An Giang province. It is these policies that have contributed to an improvement in the enrolment rate of children as well as a drop in the dropout rate. More specifically, these policies have enabled pupils eligible for preferential policies (those belonging to poor or near-poor households with poverty certificates) to be exempt from tuition fees, medical insurance, BHTN or to be prioritized to receive direct support such as scholarships, textbooks, notebooks, etc., from programs financed by the state budget or donors. During group discussions and in-depth interviews, all teachers and parents mentioned that *"if these supports do not exist, the dropout rate in the remote communes of the province would have been much higher"*. The assessment results in 9 communes of 4 project districts indicate that basically the teaching and learning facilities are adequate and students have access to full-day schooling and there isn't any serious shortage of teachers. The questionnaire results also indicate positive quality of teachers with nearly 100% of the teachers at the primary and lower secondary schools satisfying the standards set by the Ministry of Education and Training.

However, these policy programs remain restricted in scope as the funding is not sufficient to extend coverage to children in disadvantaged households (even though these households are poor or very poor but have not obtained the poverty certificate or their certificates were revoked due to limits set by programs such as "new rural area development" or "cultural communes", etc.). Consequently, children belonging to disadvantaged households are not covered under the mentioned policy

programs. This has resulted in the fact that in the project communes, the majority of dropout children or children facing the risk of dropout come from disadvantaged households while the number of these households in some project communes is in some cases rather high (as indicated by the figures in Table 1).

***Efforts made by the local authorities and teachers to prevent dropouts have positively contributed to better access to education for children in the target group***

Representatives of the local authorities in the communes and officers in the education and training sector within the provincial department/district department of education and training and heads of schools and teachers in locations visited by the survey team all stated that they have made the best endeavor to mobilize pupils to get back schools to prevent dropout or “pull the pupils back to classes” when they skipped classes or dropped out. The reportedly implemented measures include:

- 1) Reviewing and identifying students at risk of dropping out right from the beginning of the school year, including those from poor/near poor/disadvantaged households, those living with their grandparents as the parents have left for jobs in the city, those with poor academic results, those engaging in premature labor (juggling both school and work), those living with their grandparents as the parents are divorced or deceased.
- 2) A decentralization approach should be adopted in the management and mobilization of students in response to the phenomena of dropping out. For example, in case of 1 instance of absenteeism without permission, the form teacher is responsible for finding out why; in case of 2 instances, the case is to be reported to the rector; in case of 3 instances, the case is to be reported to commune officers for home visits.
- 3) Local governments are to include an indicator on dropout rates for evaluation and awarding of “Cultivated Commune/Household” titles, so that socio-political organizations such as the Women’s Union, Youth’s Union, War Veterans’ Association, Association for Encouragement of Learning, etc. can contribute to bringing children back to school.
- 4) Commune governments and socio-political organizations are to support poor and disadvantaged students, by calling for financial support from community members, or other forms of support such as clothing, books, or scholarship from sponsors.
- 5) All of the 9 communes from 4 project districts joining the survey recognize the active role of the Association for Encouragement of Learning. This is an effective channel not only to mobilize support and contributions from social organizations but also for communications and encouraging the learning spirit among local students.

Both the parents and students participating in in-depth interviews thought highly of the efforts exerted by teachers in helping students to continue schooling. A student who dropped out at grade 7<sup>th</sup> and followed his parents to Ho Chi Minh City for work commented in a group discussion that after he left for the city his form teacher called him multiple times to persuade him to return to school. Teachers are those who directly monitor students and are able to detect those at risk of dropping out. As such, teachers have a very important prevention role. However, it is necessary for them to be supported by other concerned stakeholders, such as local authorities.

The survey team, through the process of conducting the evaluation, has identified the following needs for improvement:

- Monitoring efforts of schools and local authorities often can cover only the students who are attending schools in the commune but not those attending schools in the neighboring communes. As such, the latter often receive insufficient attention from local authorities/socio-political organizations. This may be a reason leading to high dropout rates

among LSS students in certain communes (eg: Phu Huu, Khanh Hoa) despite the various efforts exercised by the teachers in Phu Huu LSS.

- Not all form teachers pay sufficient attention to their students for timely support.
- There is a lack of collaboration between parents and teachers/schools. This is particularly the case for parents who may have financial difficulties, limited awareness or their children's education. According to survey results, this is also one of the biggest challenges faced by teachers in preventing their students from dropping out. For example, there is a case where the parents were not aware of the school's program on lending text books to students, hence complaining that they could not afford text books for their children.

### **3.2.2. Factors with Adverse Impacts on Access to Education**

***Disadvantaged household financial conditions are the most prominent factor affecting access to education by children in the project area.***

As mentioned in Section 2.1 "Overview of Social and Economic Conditions in Project Districts/Communes", 7 out of 9 project communes are agriculture-based and currently facing various difficulties in economic development. This is particularly the case for the border communes of An Phu District, where the shares of poor/near poor/disadvantaged households are among the highest in the province. Financially disadvantaged conditions were pointed out in most if the in-depth interviews and group discussions with various participants to be the first and foremost reason causing students to drop out of schools. Households under such conditions cannot afford school fees for their children, and hence are unable to let them continue schooling. In combination with the perception that "*grown-up children has an obligation to contribute to household livelihood*", this has made quite a few parents force their children to quit school for work from which additional income is brought home, or the children will have to juggle both school and work, which undermines their performance at school. Besides, households' financial difficulties also mean parents' limited ability to invest in children's education (including tuition fee, health insurance, accident insurance, uniform, bicycles/means of transport, extra classes, etc.), which may cause the children to feel ashamed or inferior to their peers, discouraged and wanting to drop out.

Financial difficulties were also listed by 10 out of 33 school heads in their response to survey questionnaire as one reason leading to dropping out.

***There is a growing trend of migration of local labor to large provinces/cities such as Binh Duong, Ho Chi Minh City and Binh Duong to seek jobs in industrial zones, which has adversely affected access to education by the children in the project area. This is the largest contributing factor leading to high rates of dropout and child labor in An Giang Province.***

Due to disadvantaged economic conditions and the shortage of jobs, the local area has experienced a growing trend of labor migration to large industrial cities in the last 3 years, and this trend is anticipated to grow even more prominent in the years to come. This is further confirmed via in-depth interviews with vice chairpersons of 9 project communes. They revealed further that among those there are communes where 1/3 of the local labor force leaves for jobs in the cities (Khanh Hoa Commune of Chau Phu District or Phu Huu Commune of An Phu District). Those leaving include primarily the young and healthy (under 35-40 years old). According to reports provided by district level DOETs, while most of the migrating households with children in primary schools have applied to have their kids transferred to schools where they relocate to, this is not the case for households with children attending lower secondary schools. Even in case of transfer, not many primary school students continue their study in the new schools (eg: 3-4% for those from Khanh Hoa/Chau Phu). It is

because they fail to catch up with school curricula in large cities, do not perform well academically, feel discouraged, and finally dropped out. On the other hand, they could easily find jobs in private enterprises, in certain cases thanks to *"networks of document counterfeiters"* which help with proofs of (artificially lifted) age in order to seek jobs in large factories. In the case of migrating parents who leave their children behind under the care of the grandparents, the lack of care and attention from the parents is a reason leading to regular absenteeism, poor results and ultimately dropping out. Besides, these students are often easily lured by their friends who have left school for work. It may also be that several parents after a few years working in the city often return to their home town and bring their children along to work with them in the city. This phenomenon was reported to be most common in the case of students aged 13-16 years old (in grades 7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> in lower secondary schools). In addition, according to the responses of 21 out of 33 school heads in the survey questionnaire, *"migrating with parents for jobs"* is also a reason for students dropping out of school.

***Limited awareness among parents on the importance of education to the future of their children is also among the top reasons leading to students dropping out in project communes***

The statement above is an observation obtained from various in-depth interviews with project commune leaders, and school heads and teachers. Parents' limited awareness is said to be due to little education coupled with financial disadvantages, which results in the perception that their children *"do not need to study further once they know how to read and write"*, or *"completing grades 7-8 is enough, even if our children study further they will eventually be factory workers"* (in-depth interviews with commune leaders). In several areas, it is still common for parents to *"depend on schools and local authorities"*, hence they *"initiate demands, which if not met will cause them to take their children out of schools"* (in-depth interviews with LS and LSS heads).

The survey team has observed in group discussions with the parents/grandparents, all of whom from poor, near poor or disadvantaged households, that some expressed lack of attention to their children. For example, grandparents do not know what grade their children are in or who their form teacher is, or parents are not aware of the support their children may receive from the school as they have never attended any parent-teacher conference, etc. As for proposal of support, the parents/grandparents focus only on material things such as *"scholarship, insurance, bicycle, etc."* or even *"daily meal/snack allowance"*. Only a few parents/grandparents expressed a commitment to let their children/grandchildren continue studying till completing upper secondary school or beyond despite the multiple difficulties faced by the household. Several parents commented right in the discussion that *"it is an obligation of children to help their family out financially"*, hence they have forced their children to stay home and look after the family's business *"for fear of losing customers"*. Many parents/grandparents when asked replied that they let their children/grandchildren determine for themselves what grade to continue on to, and they do not persuade or force their children to continue studying if they want to drop out. Finally, also due to limited awareness, parents and students fail to develop a good understanding of the dangers and consequences of premature labor, and partly because of disadvantageous financial conditions, they can only see the small immediate benefits offered by the little amount of money from the work performed by their children.

An analysis of the responses to the survey questionnaire shows that *"lack of attention by or cooperation from parents"* is the biggest difficulty faced by teachers in persuading students to return to school.

### 3.3 Barriers of Access to Education for Potential Child Beneficiaries

#### 3.3.1 Identification of Potential Child Beneficiaries

Based on quantitative and qualitative data analysis and the initial project objectives, the survey team deems that potential beneficiaries for education interventions in the ENHANCE Project should include the followings (*in order of priority*):

- i. Children from disadvantaged households in 9 project communes;
- ii. Children from poor and near poor households in 9 project communes;
- iii. Children with special needs: orphans, those with divorced parents, disable children;
- iv. Children currently and living with their grandparents or relatives as their parents are working away from home;
- v. Children engaging in premature labor (currently attending school and having to work at the same time);
- vi. Priority given to LLS students.

The above order of priority has been established based on the fact that students from poor and near poor households are already entitled to various government support and subsidies such as tuition fee exemption or reduction, free health insurance, scholarship, bicycles, etc. Meanwhile, many students from disadvantaged households are not provided such support just because they do not possess a poor/near poor certificate, which is a burden for the parents. As a consequence, dropout rates among these groups of students are higher than those certified as poor/near poor. Besides, priority has been given to children with special needs or those living with grandparents/relatives due to a fact in the project communes that there is an increasingly large number of adults leaving for the city for jobs, which is also a reason leading to high rates of absenteeism or dropping out among the children from such families. In addition, when interviewed, many students and grandparents mentioned parents' divorce or premature death as another reason why they (grandparents and children) live together.

It is worth noting the target audience for the project's education support should be *identified by commune*, and should not include only students from schools in the project area. This is because many students in the project communes are attending primary schools/lower secondary schools in non-project communes.

Furthermore, as mentioned in Section 1.2, priority for education support will be given to the students who have not left the project communes but at risk of skipping classes/dropping out, as otherwise it would be a great challenge for the project to persuade those already dropping out to return to school.

#### 3.3.2 Barriers of Access to Education

The first and biggest barrier of access to education in the case of students in project communes is a very limited awareness of their parents on the importance of education and the harmful effects of premature labor. This factor was mentioned by all respondents to the survey as well as in the questionnaire completed by school managers in project areas. Similar observations were also made by parents in group discussion, with several parents expressing the determination to let their children pursue schooling to the end, even when the parents themselves are working only precarious jobs or having poor income. On the contrary, other parents may force their children to quit school even though their households are not among the most disadvantaged groups. An example was a mother-hairdresser/father-cow farmer, with productive land of their own and a child currently attending university, who insisted on having their 8th-grade daughter drop out of school as they "*need her to look after the store when the mother is away*" (parent-group discussion).

at Khanh Hoa LSS). Similarly, there are also parents who force their children to quit school as they feel *“upset with the teachers or school managers”* (interview with Phu Hu LSS school managers, An Phu District). All of the above behaviors stem from parents’ perception that *“even university graduates cannot find jobs”*, *“no matter how much you study, you will finally be a factory worker”* or *“my children have the obligations of working for a living given I have raised them this big”*. No parents when asked can name the harmful effects of premature work.

The second most important constraint is *disadvantaged household economic conditions* among families in project areas, which prevents the children from continuing schooling. This reason was also mentioned multiple times during interviews (as per requirements of the survey team, schools also invited parents of the students who already dropped out or at risk of dropping out to join interviews). The reported difficulties faced by these households are often significant initial contribution required at the beginning of the school year relative to household income (eg: over VND 1 million per primary school student or VND 1.5-1.6 million per LSS student). This amount covers various items, such as health insurance, accident insurance, infrastructure improvement, uniform, multiple funds, etc. At least 5 parents mentioned to the survey team that they had had to borrow from shark loans at an interest rate of VND 10,000-15,000 per month for each VND 1,000,000 borrowed (i.e. 1-1.5% per month or 12-18% per year) to afford schooling for their children, as many of the latter may feel *“ashamed to be out of school as the family cannot afford initial contribution”*. Many parents, also due to disadvantaged conditions as analyzed in Section 3.2 above, have to seek work in large cities, leaving their children behind in their hometown under the care of the grandparents. As such, these children often lack the care and education needed from their parents. They often absent themselves from school, hence failing to perform well academically, gradually becoming discouraged and finally dropping out. Worse still, their parents upon returning home every New Year and summer break often try to persuade the children to leave with them for the city to look after their younger siblings for the parents’ peace of mind to focus on work.

The third barrier comes from the students themselves. These groups include students with weak study results (due to various reasons, such as lack of foundation knowledge from lower grades, or inability to afford extra classes). As such, they are discouraged feeling unable to catch up with their peers. Before long, most of them will drop out, even though not all come from poor families. Some of the students (dropouts) said they they were *“persuaded by their friends to seek job in the city or forced by their parents to leave for the city”*. Another reason often quoted by the teachers is that several students are addicted to computer games or hang out with bad friends which may lead to high absenteeism. Indeed, the evaluation team during its visits to the communes also saw quite a few computer game stores locating not far away from the schools. In addition, it was advised by a commune leader that *“we have limited licensing to computer game stores, but many of those already obtained their licenses some time ago, or local governments may not have a ban on this, and hence it is very difficult to refuse licensing upon application”* (interview with a commune chairperson).

In addition, there remains a shortage of good employment opportunities in the local area for people with qualifications and capability, which results in a lack of motivation among parents to let their children continue schooling. The proliferation of new universities and colleges in Mekong Delta provinces in the last 10 years has led to an excess of supply of university graduates/job seekers relative to the demand for labor in the job market. As a consequence, many graduates fail to find jobs in the local area, have to go for jobs different from their background, or low paid jobs.

This makes study seem much less attractive. On the other hand, most of the project communes rely mainly on agricultural production, which also means not many job opportunities.

As for Nui Sam and Chau Phu A wards of Chau Doc City, although students dropping out is not a common phenomenon, high dropout rates are often experienced between the months of January and April every year. This is also the season of Chua Ba festival, when there are about 3-4 million tourists visiting the place, and students living nearby often absent themselves from school to support their parents with festival-related work or sell various commodities to tourists for money. Teachers also shared their difficulties in maintaining class attendance during this period, and that absenteeism also undermines students' study results. When interviewed, a ward chairperson commented that *"Opportunities to make money too easy too soon (by selling commodities to tourists) result in a consequence that many students want to drop out of school to work, especially those who do not perform well academically and also lack the care and attention from their parents"*.

Another factor affecting Cham students in Nhon Hoi Commune of An Phu District is the common perception of Cham families that their children should study only until completing grade 5, after that the children should stay at home and learn Cham language so that they could find work or do business in Cambodia. This is also the reason why the dropout rate of this commune is among the highest in An Phu District (and An Giang Province).

### 3.4 Needs for and Types of Education Support for Addressing Barriers

The education support needs for the potential targeted children of the project in the project communes are divided into two groups: material and non-material support as described below. However, due to the socio-economic characteristics, the survey team has divided the nine project communes into two sub-groups with different support needs: ii) the group of poor communes, which mainly depend on agricultural production and presently are in a great need for educational material resources (07 communes in 03 districts of An Phu, Chau Phu and Cho Moi); ii) the group of communes that are in the tendency of being urbanized (02 wards of Chau Doc city). Specifically, the priority needs of the first group of communes are **material supports for students and equipment for educational institutions**. GD. Meanwhile, the priority needs for the second group of communes above are **non-material support**.

#### a) **Material support:**

The material supports for the potential target children of the project are ranked in the following priority order:

- Health insurance
- Uniform
- Means of transportation: bicycle
- Scholarship
- Calculators (Casio)
- Textbooks and notebooks

In addition, at some schools in Group 1, the need for improving teaching and learning facilities/infrastructure is also very urgent. The following summary table of needs was based on the questionnaires completed by the schools and the observation results of the evaluation team:

Table 4: Current situation and need for upgrading infrastructure among 9 schools in the project

	Schools' name	Need for upgrading infrastructure
1	Phu Huu LSS, An Phu commune	Toilets; desktop computers because currently there are only 20 computers for students of grades 6 & 7
2	A Phu PS, An Phu commune	Degraded toilets & classrooms
3	Nhon Hoi LSS, An Phu commune	This school has no function rooms and no libraries. The computer room only has 07 desktop computers in use. Lack of funding for activities; lack of teaching equipment for subjects: biology, geography, experiment. Right on the way to the school is located a pond without fences, which is very dangerous for students (students may fall in the pond easily when playing)
4	Nhon Hoi Kindergarten An Phu	Currently this kindergarten is borrowing 02 classrooms of a primary school; This kindergarten is currently severely degraded
5	B Phu My Kindergarten and PS, Chau Phu	The branch kindergarten (2 classrooms) and B primary school in My Phuoc hamlet (8 classrooms) are degraded because they were built long time ago (in 2009).
6	C Khanh Hoa PS, Chau Phu	Lack of teaching and learning equipment; broken chairs and tables
7	An Thanh Trung LSS, Cho Moi	Lack of computers, rooms for subject teachers and teaching equipment
8	My An LSS, Cho Moi	Lack of rooms for subject teachers, learning and teaching equipment and teachers' toilets

#### **b) Non-material support**

The biggest need for non-material support is the need of children, parents and relevant agencies for *awareness raising activities* on the importance of education and the negative impacts of child labor. This need is urgent for both groups due to the awareness limitations as discussed in Section I above. Awareness raising activities should be done right in the schools or at the village/hamlet level (the lowest administration level) in order to be able to reach the target households and should be integrated into the existing socio-political system in the local areas. Specifically, we need to improve the capacity of people working in the population-family-child sector and connect them with schools to monitor and prevent children from dropping out from schools or prevent children from being exploited.

As for the children in the project communes, especially those having already finished LSS and being unable to or having no economic conditions to continue their high school education, the need for them to learn *necessary skills* to "move from school setting to work environment" is really necessary and is strongly endorsed by local authorities, school leaders and parents. The soft skills needed for this group of students include communication/negotiation skills (to minimize the possibility of being exploited); Entrepreneurship and income/expenditure management skills (to help them to identify

local business/ employment opportunities). The project may consider providing training to adolescents who plan to go to work in major cities to provide them with the skills they need to work and to protect themselves. This need is necessary for both commune groups, but especially vital for the two wards of Chau Doc city, where there are many business start-up opportunities for students thanks to the tourism development trends at Ba Nui Sam Pagoda. The soft skill training should be conducted in the form of students' clubs initiated and maintained by local lower secondary schools (LSS)/upper secondary schools (USS) or Youth Unions.

In addition, *career guidance and vocational training* are also essential for LSS and USS students who have dropped out from schools or are at risk of dropping out of schools.

## IV. RECOMMENDATIONS:

### 4.1 Educational Support Strategies for the Project Area

Educational support will be provided directly to children aged 5 to 17 years old who are beneficiaries in the 09 communes of the 04 project districts in An Giang. The children benefiting from the educational support program will be selected by An Giang DOLISA in collaboration with the local schools and the technical and financial support from the project. Therefore, the tri-partite coordination (An Giang DOLISA, An Giang DOET and ENHANCE/ILO project) is a prerequisite for the effective provision of support for the targeted group. An Giang province will establish a **mechanism for the implementation of the project**. This mechanism shall be coordinated by DOLISA in collaboration with other stakeholders, such as DOET, An Giang Fisheries Association, Provincial Cooperative Alliance and Farmers' Union ... DOLISA will maintain quarterly meetings to update information on the project activities and share work plans of the next quarter of the project partners in the province. DOET will also participate in this coordination mechanism but will be mainly responsible for carrying out activities in the education sector in the province.

In fact, the project districts in An Giang are the departing point for many migrants to migrate large cities (such as Binh Duong / Dong Nai / HCMC). As An Giang and Ho Chi Minh City are the two of the three project provinces and Binh Duong / Dong Nai are the provinces that have implemented the ILO's SCORE project, it is a good idea to pilot a model to support children who are working in HCMC/ Binh Duong/Dong Nai to return home by establishing a "bridge" between the two ends (destination place and departure place). By doing this, we can bring children home and refer them to local services, and also we can monitor the changes in children and their family members as well as evaluate the effectiveness of the support activities provided by the project. Although the pilot implementation of this model requires close monitoring and coordination across the provinces, it will also contribute significantly to the sustainability of future project interventions.

An Giang DOET and DOLISA will keep close contact with each other to share and learn experiences from each other during the project implementation as well as during the replication of the models supported by the project to other districts in the province.

Regarding the implementation mode, ILO will sign IA/TOR with each partner based on the annual work plans approved by MOLISA. DOET shall share quarterly work plans with DOLISA so that the project staff can monitor and support the implementation. Also, when DOLISA implement the project activities, DOLISA needs to engage people from the education sectors at all levels to ensure that they understand the project and they will cooperate with DOLISA.

## 4.2 Education Support Packages

The survey team, based on an analysis of the need for support discussed in section 3.2 above, has proposed 3 types of education support packages to the target child beneficiaries in An Giang Province: a) material support to individual students; b) material support to schools; and c) non-material support. In particular, packages (a) and (b) may differ among different types of communes, while package (c) is provided uniformly to all 9 communes.

### a) Material support to individual students

In the case of 7 physically disadvantaged communes (group 1), the following types of support have been proposed to help students continue schooling, via relieving the financial burden on their family and also for the schools in project areas:

- Support to disadvantaged children in joining health insurance and accident insurance.
- Provision of 1 set of uniform to the target child beneficiaries, so that they have at least 2 sets for changing in rainy days;
- Provision of bicycles for students locating away from school (and hence has to hitch-hike);
- Provision of scholarships for children from poor or disadvantaged households, based on their academic performance (at least distinction) and good ethics, as an encouragement of learning and improvement of ethics;
- Provision of books and note books to poor or disadvantaged children.

In the case of 2 wards in Chau Doc City, thanks to abundance resources of the local government, socio-political organizations, other organizations and individuals (from enterprises, temples, etc.), material support in Nui Sam is prioritized for hamlets locating away from the ward center, as their economy still rely mainly on agricultural production and labor migration is prevalent. As for Chau Phu A, the only material support provided is scholarships for students from disadvantaged households with good academic performance.

Details for materials support to individual students in each commune are listed below:

	Commune	Heal Insurance	Uniform	Bicycle	Scholarship	Accident Insurance
1	My An, Cho Moi	x	x	x	x	x
2	Tan My, Cho Moi	x	x	x	x	x
3	An Thanh Trung, Cho Moi	x	x	x	x	x
4	Khanh Hoa, Chau Phu	x	x	x	x	x
5	My Phu, Chau Phu	x	x	x	x	x
6	Nhon Hoi, An Phu	x	x	x	x	x
7	Phu Huu, An Phu	x	x	x	x	x
8	Nui Sam, Chau Doc				x	
9	Chau Phu A, Chau Doc				x	

The following process has been proposed for the delivery of support packages to individual students:

- Schools are to list all students needing support in an order of priority;
- Such lists are to be sent to the district level DOET for aggregation, profiling, verification and arrival at a short list of students along with their specific needs for support (by school) and then for submission to the provincial DOET;

- The provincial DOET is to forward to aggregate the list of students needing support to the ENHANCE/ILO Project for preparation of funds and procurement;
- ILO is to work with suppliers for procurement in accordance with internal regulations;
- Suppliers are to deliver ordered items to provincial DOET, which will then make allocations in the presence of provincial DOLISA and the ILO.

**b) Material support to schools and other education facilities**

As for the 7 disadvantaged communes mentioned above (group 1), consideration should be made regarding the following support for school infrastructure improvement and procurement of teaching and learning instruments, in order to improve the quality of teaching and attract more students to school.

	School/District/Commune	PCs	Toilet Repair	Chairs & Tables	Teaching Instrument	Classroom Repairs
1	Phu Huu LSS, An Phu	X	X		X	
2	Phu Huu A LS, An Phu		X			X
3	Nhon Hoi LSS, An Phu	X	X	X	X	X
4	Nhoi Hoi Kindergarten, An Phu	X	X	X	X	X
5	My Phu B Kindergarten and PS, Chau Phu			X	X	X
6	Khanh Hoa C PS, Chau Phu			X	X	
7	An Thanh Trung LSS, Cho Moi	X			X	
8	My An LSS, Cho Moi	X			X	

**c) Non-material Support**

i) Awareness raising for children, parents, local government staff and relevant personnel on child labor and the importance of education. Concrete activities for each target group include the following:

- For school children: integration of awareness raising activities in programs of the Youth Union, or seeking the support of teachers;
- For other children in the community: establishment of community children's club (following UNICEF model currently running in My Phu – Chau Phu). The focus of club operation will be on awareness raising on the importance of learning and provision of necessary skills for independent living and for self-protection against labor exploitation (if involved in premature employment).
- For families of target child beneficiaries: provincial DOET is to collaborate with provincial DOLISA and with commune collaborators of population/children's affairs in the profiling of these households, so as include them for livelihood support.
- Besides, in order to ensure effective and sustainable awareness raising, consideration should be made regarding the use of a new communications model so-called SCREAM (Supporting Children's Rights via Education, Arts and Communications). ILO is to be responsible for organizing TOT training, for which participants include personnel from central and local agencies, including provincial DOLISA, DOET, social-political organizations and various associations on communications for better awareness on child labor. Post training, plans of actions for communications on awareness raising are to be developed, including activities such as theatre, concerts, competitions (e.g. paintings) exhibitions, entertainment, sports, etc. Provincial DOET is to be responsible for implementing these activities within schools, while provincial DOLISA is to implement these activities at community level.

ii) Organization of vocational and skills training/career guidance/business start-up training for students of lower secondary or higher levels, including several concrete activities as proposed by the survey team:

- ILO is to support provincial DOET to organize a TOT course on *Know about Business* (KAB) for school teachers in Chau Phu District who did not get to attend KAB training in August 2017. Besides, DOET can invite several trainer-participants from non-project districts in order to scale up KAB training to the entire province, thereby meeting the MOET's requirement on KAB training.
- In the case of the teachers who have attended KAB training, the province is to collaborate with DOET in supporting them to finalize their lesson plans (following MOET's standard curricula) for use at their schools. At the end of every school year, provincial DOET and the Project are to take stock of the progress and extend commendation to schools that perform well, and base on that to provide inputs for revising curriculum content, and consider scaling up KAB training to the entire provinces.
- Schools in project communes can implement a pilot program for business start-up targeting children, so that those aged 14-17 who wants to go into entrepreneurship can have a forum for sharing their ideas and realizing their dreams.