



Knowledge-Driven Microenterprise Development (KDMD)

Contract No. EEM-C-00-08-00004-00

Semi-annual Report

May 14, 2008 – November 14, 2008

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1. KDMD Start Up

Start-up activities commenced as soon as the contract was awarded and included the following:

1.1 Key QED Personnel Transitioned from AMAP to KDMD and additional KDMD personnel were hired.

At the start of KDMD, Kristine Powers became the Chief of Party after being the AMAP KMC Task Order Manager . Tom Sinclair became the Deputy Chief of Party after serving as the AMAP Training and Administration Task Order Manager.

Three new team members were hired between May and November. Emet LaBoone serves as the Senior Learning Specialist; Ashely Kiehnau serves as the Project Assistant, and Renee Gifford serves as the Grants Manager.

Anne Specca began with the KDMD as the A&L Specialist. Ms. Specca has since left the project. QED has put forth Natalie Greenberg as its proposed candidate to replace Ms. Specca as key personnel. This request has received CTO approval and QED is awaiting CO approval.

1.2 KDMD office established at QED HQ

The KDMD office was established within the QED home office space. New charge codes were set up within the QED accounting system, new policies and procedures were developed and housed on the KDMD team wiki, and other systems were developed at the start of the contract to lay the foundation for implementing KDMD activities .

1.3 KDMD kick-off retreat delivered

A kick-off retreat was held on June 12 – 13, 2008 for the KDMD team. It included sessions on envisioning success, becoming familiar with the collaborative possibilities offered by web 2.0, and icebreakers on the first day. The second day included an open dialogue on priority issues and the direction of KDMD facilitated by TRG sub-contractor Ed Salt. QED then planned an internal retreat, held at and facilitated by TRG, to streamline internal operations, build a more cohesive team and optimize all staff contributions.

1.4 Sub-contracts signed

IRG signed its sub-contract with KDMD on June 24, 2008. TRG signed its contract on August 27, 2008. QED has also a standing purchase order with Siren Digital Communications that was signed on September 17, 2008.

1.5 Annual work plan submitted

The KDMD work plan was submitted to USAID on September 15, 2008 and comments were received shortly thereafter. A work plan review session is planned for January 2009.

2. TECHNICAL WORK PLAN: CORE ACTIVITIES

To achieve the objectives outlined in the May 14, 2008 – May 14, 2009 work plan during this reporting period, the KDMD team managed work across the six core activity areas below:

- 2.1 Knowledge Stock
- 2.2 Knowledge Flow (broken out by 7 subcategories)
- 2.3 Knowledge Infrastructure
- 2.4 Enabling Environment
- 2.5 Grants Under Contract (GUC) Management
- 2.6 Assessing & Learning

2.1 Knowledge Stock

Summary: Knowledge stock comprises products that capture and share tacit and explicit microenterprise development and KM knowledge, expressed in a variety of formal, and informal formats, including, but not limited to: online, print, audio, and video products, including products directly funded by MD as well as those by other practitioners, USAID operating units and other partners.

Tasks Completed:

- **Increased knowledge** stock by remaining in frequent contact with key partners, including FIELD-Support, Implementation Grants Program (IGP), AMAP and its successor contracts, SEEP, and other key MD partners to identify areas of opportunity and collaboration.
 - QED has posted more than 270 new resources on microLINKS from 5/14/2008 through 11/14/2008.
 - QED finalized SAGA Cornell University research pages “Conversations” which features screencast interviews and research in an interactive design. It was announced in Connections; e-postcard was sent to MD office, Poverty Reduction conference and Symposium participants. Views are tracked.
- **Developed Notes from the Field.** KDMD has featured a new Note each month, including:
 - **June 2008:** Note from a PLP: Using Peer Learning to Develop Program Design (Submitted by the SEEP Network)
 - **July 2008:** Note from Haiti: Reaching the Rural Poor with Microfinance (Submitted by DAI)
 - **August 2008:** Note from Guatemala: Integrating the Unbanked through Remittance-Linked Product Development (Submitted by WOCCU – FIELD LWA Project)
 - **September 2008:** Note from the Field: Utilizing Youth-Responsive Market Research (Submitted by the SEEP Network)
 - **October 2008:** Note from the Field: Supporting Social Performance in Microfinance (Submitted by IRIS – FIELD LWA Project)
 - **November 2008:** Note from India: Greening Microfinance to Turn Waste into Wealth (Submitted by Green Microfinance)
- **MED Essentials** QED designed a process for the MD office to collaboratively develop comprehensive presentation materials to articulate basic MED concepts, principles and best practices and make them accessible for a variety of audiences.
 - The Knowledge Assets Framework was created on a wiki (www.microlinks.org/kaf) to create “layers” of content that progressively achieve the following purposes: Introduce, Inform, Advise, Instruct, and Collaborate.
 - MED Essentials is presently undergoing peer review and we expect further deepening of content to continue into the next reporting period. Ultimately, the MED Essentials wiki will be developed into a “build-your-own-presentation” tool to meet a variety of requests for MD briefings from diverse audiences, when requested.

- **Five Audio Interviews were conducted and posted to microLINKS.** As special opportunities presented themselves, KDMD was able to quickly take advantage of its recording and screencast capabilities to broadly share insights from leading practitioners.
 - **Two exit interviews** with outgoing MD staff were conducted. The first with Scott Kleinberg covered broad topics beyond MED, including some of his business enabling environment work in high threat environments. The second, with Nhu-An Tran, detailed the specific triumphs and challenges surrounding her early experiences of encouraging the international development community to adopt the knowledge management ethos in conjunction with MED team at USAID.
 - **An interview with Giff Laube**, from FINCA Esperanza Verde an eco-lodge / organic coffee farm was conducted in conjunction with Laura Meissner of the SEEP Network during their conference in November.
 - **A podcast on remittances** was produced with Thomas Debass and leaders in the field of remittances and posted in Conversations.
 - A short presentation and **question / answer session by Dr. Mor** of the IFMR Trust was recorded on his visit to Washington, DC.
 - A special morning event with **Dr. John Humphrey** from the University of Sussex was also produced this quarter.

2.2 Knowledge Flow

2.2.1 Planning (Strategy & Analysis)

Summary: Strategies, techniques, approaches and tools underlying and comprising project activities at all stages of planning and implementation to promote collaboration and knowledge sharing among practitioners to speed innovation and adoption of new learning in order to replicate innovations and bring them to scale.

Tasks Completed:

- **Activity Planning Guidance** available for CTO review. The KDMD Team began to develop the Activity Planning Guidance on the internal team wiki to streamline assessment and planning processes for working with partners and to empower and ensure consistency across the KDMD team when designing new activities or responding to external requests. The Guidance was used to develop and plan activities such as, the Conflict Webinar, the KM Blog, the Migrant Remittances Blog, and the ED communications strategy. Throughout the next reporting period, this guidance will continue to be refined for internal purposes as well as for public dissemination and use.
- **Designed and delivered PASSN strategy workshop** to help define a K&L strategy for PASSN that represents opportunities at both an office and Agency level.
 - The need for regular meetings was identified and a Basecamp site was established to support better project communications and management. Retreat notes were posted and several writeboards launched to capture strategic inputs to a PASSN K&L strategy.
 - QED will incorporate workshop outputs into the next workplan review to inform ongoing activity development. The next phase will address the redeployment of PovertyFrontiers.org on the Ecco platform.

- Possible activities to consider planning in the next reporting period include a community of practice to support an IGP round; exploring an online “book club,” and producing a screencast on a PASSN presentation, delivered by Don Sillers.

2.2.2 Communications

Summary: The QED Team advised on and helped design and develop communication products tailored for specific audiences to easily access, digest, and apply knowledge resources, based on an understanding of optimal formats for intended effect. Siren continued to design and deliver engaging print and digital communication products.

Tasks Completed:

- **Refined communications strategies** by working with the ED technical and/or thematic teams to better assess strategic goals linked to priority stakeholders to better target communications and knowledge sharing opportunities.
 - Designed and delivered the cross-cutting Youth Livelihoods sub-site in close consultation with MD’s youth advisors. The launch of the sub-site was timed to coincide with Making Cents’ 2008 Global Youth Enterprise Conference (GYEC) in mid-September. QED had an exhibition table at the GYEC at which microLINKS, Connections, the renewed ED/FS pages and the brand new Youth sub-site were successfully promoted.
 - Designed an outreach strategy with the ED technical team to feed into the K&PII work plan and the KDMD/ACDI/VOCA joint knowledge and learning plan.
- **Continued building relationships** with key organizations and firms to proactively maintain communication to ensure effective collaboration and coordination. This activity was done in close coordination with the CTO.
 - Maintained regular contact with other MED knowledge sharing partners—web site and listserv administrators, conference planners, bloggers, working groups/network moderators, etc—to recognize opportunities to maximize visibility and dissemination of MD activities. The Microfinance Website Managers group has continued to provide a valuable working platform for increased communication and knowledge sharing.
- **Created targeted communications products** in fulfillment of specific MD communications and knowledge sharing objectives and published communication products showcasing innovation:
 - For the 2008 SEEP Annual Conference we minimized reliance on paper communications products in favor of a more comprehensive and effective program book ad to promote the extensive, dynamic online resources available on KDMD websites. We also included a few strategic foundation materials in the SEEP participant kitbags to increase awareness and promote new microLINKS’ and Poverty Frontiers’ resources. In addition, we created a slideshow showcasing successful USAID/MD initiatives corresponding to the SEEP conference tracks, and flyers to promote the Knowledge Lab and the newly launched Learning Organizations wiki (formerly the BELO wiki).
 - Produced materials promoting KDMD resources for the value chain workshop and the DLI meeting hosted by the MD office.
- QED has met with EGAT intranet management to make updates and is developing a more comprehensive re-design that will be informed by and aligned with the MED essentials work.

- During this time period, KDMD **contributed Morning Glory stories** to MD on the following topics. *[Note: The date below indicates when it was submitted to the MD office because KDMD staff do not have access to the intranet]*
 - World Council of Credit Unions Launches Peru’s First Nation-wide Credit Union Network (posted 11/5)
 - Visit USAID’s New Cross-Cutting Youth Livelihoods Pages (Submitted 10/13)
 - USAID Program Launches an Audio Interview Series “Conversations on Poverty” (submitted 9/9)
- **Maintained, grew, and updated contact databases** for various target audiences.
- Provided ongoing **quality assurance for all materials**—print and digital—to ensure the highest standards in messaging, style, and branding were consistently met
- Continued **streamlining of internal communications** and outreach guidance on the team wiki.

2.2.3 Event Production

Summary: We worked with MD to develop a pipeline of topics; identify and secure appropriate speakers; advise the speakers on appropriate message delivery techniques; organize the seminars; refine, format, and brand the presentations; advertise the events to appropriate audiences; record the seminars; and post a voice-over-PowerPoint of the event, if appropriate. The seminars were organized with improved accessibility and participation through teleconferencing and video feeds (webinars). In the future, seminars may include blogging or presenter discussion forums.

Tasks Completed:

- A one-hour webinar titled “How Does Microfinance Contribute to Economic Recovery in Conflict Affected Countries?” was delivered on October 23, 2008. This event was carried out by one primary presenter, several panelists, and two organizers. Sixty-seven people participated from seventeen countries and twenty-three questions were submitted. A screen cast recording of the event was posted on microLINKS. Participant feedback was collected via a survey, and an AAR was also conducted post-webinar to evaluate and integrate learning into similar future events.
- Breakfast Seminar Series. During the period May 14-November 14, 2008, five breakfast seminars and one enterprise development special event seminar took place and were posted as screencasts on microLINKS. On average, these events attract approximately fifty participants per seminar. The events were presented by and entitled:
 - May 21 2008. Stephen McCarthy, **Linking Smallholders in Ethiopia and Rwanda to Higher Value Coffee Markets**
 - June 26 2008. Joan Parker, **Maximizing the "Value" of Value Chain Programs in Conflict-Affected Environments**
 - July 31 2008. Bryanna Millis and Ulrich Ernst, **From Red Tape to Red Carpets: Enhancing the Competitiveness Impacts of Business Enabling Environment (BEE) Reforms**
 - September 4, 2008. Ruth Campbell and Rob Henning, **Collaborating to Compete-the Value of Trust and Inter-firm Collaboration**

- October 2, 2008. Zan Northrip and Don Snodgrass, **Latest Trends in Evaluation: Interviews with Industry Leaders**
 - November 13, 2008 Special Event. John Humphrey, **Private Standards, Small Farmers and Donor Policy: EUREPGAP in Kenya**
- Microfinance Learning and Innovations Seminar Series. During the period May 14-November 14, 2008, five After Hours seminars and one USAID/MD Microfinance Special Event took place. Four have been posted as screencasts on microLINKS; two are currently being produced. On average, these events attract between forty and fifty participants. The event presenters and titles are as follows:
 - June 11, 2008. Lauren Mitten, Lisa Parrott, and Mary McVay; **Microenterprise Development and HIV/AIDS**
 - July 16, 2008. Tanir Helayel and Konstantin Andreev; **Risk Management and Microfinance: In Search of Market Failures**
 - August 13, 2008. Gary Woller; **Tools for Measuring the Social Performance of MFIs**
 - September 17, 2008. Margie Brand, Btissam Dardari, Jesse Nansungu, Elena Reilly; **Challenges, Opportunities and Learning in Youth Microfinance**
 - October 20, 2008. Jennifer Powers, Thomas Debass, Harvey Grasty and IWB ; **Is Financial Democracy a Click Away? Peer-to-Peer Lending and Beyond**
 - October 28, 2008. Dr. Nachiket Mor **Unlocking Capital Markets for Rural India**
 - QED created space on microLINKS for a **Value Chain Finance Competition** and managed applications. QED is in the process of working with ACDI/VOCA to plan a ceremony.
 - The **September 9th Value Chain Workshop** was recorded, produced as a screencast and is now available as an introduction to and overview of the ED team's value chain work.

2.2.4 Collaboration & Knowledge Sharing

Summary: QED advised on, designed, launched, and supported various collaborative strategies and initiatives to create knowledge-sharing opportunities for diverse audiences. Over this reporting period, QED prepared for the launch of a new blog, launched the beta version of the MIKAL community, and set up a new learning organizations forum and wiki. QED also organized Speaker's Corners, provided support for existing communities and learning networks, and produced screencasts to leverage the learning from Breakfast and After Hours seminars. QED also participated in various learning events and continued its use of internal learning tools on the K&L Community and the K&L wiki. The next reporting period will also likely bring the start of two new GUC-related communities. QED will continue to explore ways to improve these existing activities, and explore and test new models of collaboration, especially in the new Ecco environment.

Tasks Completed:

- QED facilitated four three-day, on-line, collaborative **Speaker's Corners** hosted by a leading expert or practitioner on topical MED, and poverty analysis issues:
 - July 8-10: Savings: The Forgotten Half of Financial Interventions? Hosted by Madhurantika Moullick of MicroSave. A synthesis document will be developed; A compilation document was produced and disseminated.

- **September 16-18: Outsourcing Options for Microfinance Institutions.** Hosted by Alice Liu. A compilation document was produced and disseminated.
 - **September 23-25: Economic Recovery Standards.** Hosted by Laura Meissner and Tracy Gerstle of SEEP. A compilation document was produced and disseminated. The results are used by the hosts to further develop the Standards.
 - **October 14-16, Microfinance and Enterprise Development: Effective Tools to Eradicate Poverty.** Hosted by Jan Maes and The SEEP Network Poverty Outreach Working Group. A synthesis document and compilation document are being developed.
- Screencasts of each of the Breakfast and After Hours seminars through November were recorded, produced and posted on microLINKS. The microfinance webinar of October 23rd was also recorded and produced as a screencast for those unable to participate live.
 - QED advised on, initiated and supported Communities of Practice (CoPs) and Learning Networks (LN) as needed and provided training to its facilitators or leaders. QED also coordinates activities and learning across CoPs. The following activities, in particular, strengthened communities and networks:
 - **ED and FS Learning Networks:** QED conducted regular “check-in” meetings with management teams of both the Financial Services and Enterprise Development Learning Networks. Through webinars and presentations to IGP management teams and grantees, QED raised awareness for activity and learning product opportunities related to the LNs and KDMD. At the 2008 SEEP Conference, QED recorded an interview as an IGP learning product. A screencast from this interview will be combined with a follow-up activity (such as a discussion) to maximize its usefulness to the network.
 - **MIKAL:** QED developed a strategy with USAID and military members to implement a civil/military community. A Website for MIKAL (Microenterprise Interagency Knowledge and Learning) has been developed and is currently open for beta testing by a focus group consisting of USAID and Military participants.
 - **CoP for community leaders:** QED has developed a CoP for community leaders for enhanced learning and collaboration, which can be launched when there are members to populate the community.
 - **A microLINKS “Conversation” (podcast)** was also initiated, at the request of the MD office, with the Women’s Organization related to their Market Assessment Toolkit for Vocational Training.

In addition to the collaborative and knowledge-sharing opportunities QED currently provides to advance MED practice, the QED Team works on a parallel track to learn from others and share our experience with KM activities, approaches, and tools, especially as it applies to the international development community.

We expect these activities to accelerate now that we have put in place key tools and mechanisms, including:

- **K&L CoP** on microLINKS continued as a useful place to present and discuss new ideas among the client and implementer team(s). QED maintains the community and relevant information is “promoted” to the wiki operations manual.
- **Teamwiki:** QED continued to grow its internal operations manual in wiki format – an easy-to-access, easy-to-update guide on what we do and how we do it (and improve it).
- **K&L Resources Wiki:** We began developing a “pocket” of the teamwiki to serve as an internal resource on K&L approaches, tools, guidance, best practice, etc. This may one day be spun off as a public resource to complement the KM Lab.

- **Event participation:** QED monitors interesting KM and adult-learning related activities and participates by calling in to online learning events and webinars, attending presentations, and following relevant blogs. For example, QED attended the IDEAS conference (November), development information or KM presentations, webinars presented by the LINGO (Large International NGO) Network, and a Twitter event.
- **Social bookmarking:** QED continued social bookmarking and tagging of knowledge and learning resources in USAID's del.icio.us account.
- **KM Blog on the KM Lab.** As described above, preparations are underway for this blog on knowledge-driven development, which will be a key outlet for promoting cutting-edge KM ideas.
- Continued to develop the microLINKS' **KM Lab page** to showcase K&L tools and techniques
- **Learning Organizations Forum and Wiki:** A Learning Organizations forum and wiki were developed, based on the work of the AMAP Building Effective Learning Organizations program and Speaker's Corner on the same topic. The forum and wiki were launched at the Nov. 2008 SEEP AGM.
- The **Microfinance Website Managers** group has continued to provide a valuable working platform for increased communication and knowledge sharing.

2.2.5 Product Development & Dissemination

Summary: QED continues to proactively identify topics, opportunities and a strategy for effective dissemination of knowledge products to target audiences.

Tasks Completed:

- Video footage obtained under AMAP TA at the Expanding Exporting High Value Vegetables Workshop (Arusha, Tanzania on April 23, 2008) was edited and segmented into small clips in order to be used as inputs in other training and learning activities. The video clips were indexed by enterprise development terms to allow for MD, QED, and other partners to easily identify specific clips. DAI accessed this index and requested several clips for use in a particular learning product for Ghanaian farmers.
- An **RSS feed has been launched** to disseminate all new research products posted on microLINKS and statistics will be gathered on its users.
- QED supported the development of new products through advice, guidance, design and execution. These included the KDD Blog, the Migrant Remittances Newsletter, the Value Chain wiki, the Learning Organizations Wiki, the Key Features of the Value Chain Seminar, and the Conflict Webinar, the first in a series of webinars QED anticipates hosting.

2.2.6 Training & Learning Supports

Summary: During the reporting period, the KDMD team began developing work plans to conduct training under buy-in programs and to increase its level of training conducted online.

Tasks Completed:

- On August 21, 2008, the KDMD team presented the MD Training Strategy: Gap Analysis and Recommendations. The current state of training, the desired state of training, recommendations for bridging the gap between the two were discussed for each technical team in the MD office.
- The training page on microLINKS was maintained and regularly updated throughout the reporting period.
- **EG Buy-in:** Two weeks of training presentations and discussions were recorded in Arlington and Bethesda and archived for later use for the Economic Growth training series being handed over from Abt Associates. *[Blue-shaded items are EG buy in activities]*

2.2.7 Other

Summary: QED will work with the KDMD CTO to determine the best use of KDMD resources when ad-hoc support is requested.

Tasks Completed:

- Provided logistical and administrative support, in collaboration with the CTO, in preparation for the Global Youth Enterprise Conference, the SEEP conference and other events.
- Supported MD and PASSN to design and deliver public presentations.

2.3 Knowledge Infrastructure

Summary: QED continued to explore technological features and functions to enable digital and other dynamic knowledge flows, as well as to enhance the structure that knowledge takes, including print, digital, and face-to-face, as in the case of events and meetings. QED successfully launched a webinar on the subject of conflict, with a high turn-out rate. Not only have technical and operational wikis continued to take shape, the idea has become an inherent consideration among other technical activities. The iGoogle account aggregates various website tracking statistics and can be used by the MD office to better understand audiences and sell microLINKS to various interests and needs. Finally, QED forged ahead with deepening its understanding of the Ecco platform and migration road map by testing Ecco with a BETA community for EGAT trainees, and through various meetings with Tomoye to plan the steps for a migration that will be as seamless as possible.

Tasks Completed:

- QED is in the process of upgrading microLINKS and PovertyFrontiers to Ecco. A migration road map lays out the next steps of a phased approach to transfer both platforms. The current platform will run in parallel with the new system until the upgraded system has been fully tested and deployed.
- QED continues to add web 2.0 capabilities to its offerings. As described earlier, an RSS feed for the latest research has been added to microLINKS' home page.

- QED improved upon the presentation of a number of technical areas on microLINKS, including the Financial Services and Enterprise Development resources pages, and developed new cross-cutting pages on the site in the areas of Microenterprise Development and Conflict and Youth Livelihoods.
 - In June, QED completed the **redesign and reorganization of the Financial Services Resources** to provide easier access to key resources and to reflect MD's guiding framework for financial services programming. QED recommended creating overviews of priority topics to provide users with a quick summary of the issues, learning agendas, and knowledge emerging from key activities. Feature boxes and Improving Practice sections highlight current and practical resources on individual pages.
 - Also in June, QED launched the **Microenterprise Development and Conflict sub-site**, a hub for MD initiatives related to microfinance, value chain and enterprise development in conflict-affected environments. Visitors are invited to find out more about the learning emerging from MD's conflict-related initiatives on the Resources and Events pages and to use the Interactive Inventory of Economic Recovery Tools to browse, rate, comment on, and upload additional tools.
 - To improve access to the wealth of knowledge generated through the Enterprise Development initiatives, the **ED Resources pages were redesigned** in September. The goal of the redesign was to provide a clearer introduction to ED activities and approaches, context for and easy entry to technical knowledge, and a design framework to accommodate the transfer of content being created on the Value Chain wiki once that content is finalized.
 - A new, cross-cutting **sub-site on Youth Livelihoods** was launched in mid-September.
- The use of wikis has become an integrated featured of microLINKS over the past six months, both for its internal operations and for MD and its partners. QED has helped set up a number of wikis and has trained technical teams in using them.
- QED organized a webinar on the subject of conflict.
- QED consolidated website tracking information on an **iGoogle account** and has incorporated this into its **MD webkit** launch.
- QED developed a **Beta community on Ecco** for the EG Training participants. Resources were posted and participants were encouraged to pose questions to presenters/post resources.
- **We reviewed and refined existing knowledge products and services**, continuing to make improvements to process, form, and function to more effectively and efficiently achieve project objectives. This included updating our current suite of activities, including:
 - Notes from the Field
 - Connections Newsletter: Connections continues to go out the first Wednesday of each month and is sent to about 6,000 people. During this reporting period, Connections was distributed on June 4, July 2, August 6, September 3, October 1 and November
 - Screencasts
 - Video and audio products
 - Knowledge product templates such as microNOTES, etc.
 - Compilations and summaries of Speaker's Corners
 - Seminar series formats and interactivity features
 - Online forums including Speaker's Corners, Communities of Practice, and Learning Networks

2.4 Enabling Environment

Summary: We continue to appreciate and build an awareness of the enabling environment for active knowledge sharing and collaboration, by considering contextual elements to our work, including culture and technology, and accelerating adoption by providing incentives and removing existing roadblocks. We actively seek opportunities to do this at every level, including the MD office, USAID operating units, external partners, and field practitioners.

Tasks Completed:

- KDMD continued to **build relationships** and energize internal and external networks through active participation in communities and discussion forums (e.g. SEEP's first virtual conference on HIV/AIDS and MED); attending leading conferences, workshops and events (2008 EGAT Knowledge Management Fair, 2008 Global Youth Enterprise Conference, 2008 SEEP Annual Conference and more); and continued to test, enhance, and refine our knowledge-sharing tools.
- QED has developed and will soon launch a customized **online Webkit** to further aid the MD office in integration, improved coordination and leveraging activities and events across MD, its partners, and the QED Team. We have selected a variety of tools and aggregated them on a customized iGoogle page, including: a shared calendar; a social bookmarking tool; an upgraded Basecamp site for collaborative project management; RSS feeds from microLINKS; a **customized digital A&L dashboard** that aggregates and creatively showcases user statistics, and customized website feeds to display a selection of industry blogs and online resources.

2.5 Grants under Contract (GUC) Management

Summary: The grants-under-contract component was launched to complement KDMD's range of knowledge management and learning activities and to provide financial support for partner organizations to increase their knowledge and learning capacities. The focus during this reporting period was to put the right infrastructure in place for grants to be procured and awarded.

Tasks Completed:

- A GUC Manager was hired and began employment with QED on September 8, 2008.
- A GUC manual was drafted and submitted to USAID for approval in October 2008.
- Two GUC concepts and RFA's were being developed at the end of the reporting period in November. In addition, a meeting with USAID took place in preparation for KDMD's management of learning networks for each GUC round.

2.6 Assessing & Learning Plan

Summary: Assessing and Learning (A&L) is an integral component of each of our activities. Through quantitative and qualitative measures, we have tracked the adoption and application of KDMD-disseminated knowledge by measuring traditional outputs such as the accessibility, popularity, and value of training and web-based information. We consistently learn from experience, adapt, and incorporate results into project planning and activity design. This dynamic process is outlined and captured on our team wiki in the Activity Planning Guidance section. Action-Reviews (AARs) are a common forum used

by the KDMD team to reflect on past activities and articulate lessons learned; which, in turn, are woven into future planning.

Tasks Completed:

- Baseline stats on microLINKS and Poverty Frontiers as well as other operational and activity stats were continued to be collected on a monthly basis. A monthly dashboard on the MD iGoogle page was customized to present this data. A launch of this space will follow during the next semi-annual period. Content management decisions on issues such as, promotion, page placement, and navigation were made to improve usability based on the web stats analysis. This will continue during the next period and become more systematic in our team processes.
- The Activity Planning Guidance on our internal wiki was developed and is continually being refined. This real-time, A&L mechanism, that simultaneously builds our own best practice, will be opened up as a collaborative tool to share our knowledge to a public audience during the next semi-annual period.
- Regularly conducted AARs to capture lessons learned and to make ongoing improvements to process at all levels, via continual updates to the KDMD operations wiki. Seven AARs were carried out during the reporting period including those for the Conflict Webinar, AMAP TA/KMC, Speaker's Corners (following the Savings SC), Outsourcing options SC, PASSN, AMAP, and Learning Networks.
- A new project management web-based application, using Dabble DB, was built to hold our activity information in one place and serve all of our reporting needs. This database has built-in A&L triggers for each activity with indicator, output/accomplishment, and recommendation fields for each activity. This will improve and systematize our current A&L processes.
- Several team meetings, including an A&L Learning Day have been held to inform the development of the A&L Plan. Next steps have been identified.

3. BUY-IN STRATEGY

Summary: KM is increasingly being built into new USAID programs as a central way to achieve development impact. As a result of MD's KM success, several USAID operating units are now planning similar KM activities and have approached the MD office for support, guidance, and access to K&L services. The QED Team is uniquely positioned to educate other operating units on the developmental benefits of K&L and to aid in the design and implementation of cost-effective solutions. When an opportunity for a buy in is presented, QED will work with the CTO to produce a work plan that parallels the structure and activities of this work plan (with the assumption that buy-in activities will only comprise a subset of core KDMD activities).

In this time period, buy-ins were initiated with the Economic Growth Team and the EE/DG/Social Transitions Team.

Tasks Completed:

- A webpage was created for the October 20-24, 2008 EG Officers' Training and Investment Course. It included logistical information, key resource documents, and required course preparation.

4. MANAGEMENT AND PERSONNEL

Ongoing Tasks include:

Effective contract and financial management is important for this large, complex project. QED KDMD management regularly communicates with the CTO and the CO regarding financial and contractual matters. Accurate and detailed monthly vouchers for KDMD are submitted to USAID for approval. Quarterly accruals and other financial reports, as requested, are submitted to the CTO. KDMD management reviews and approves all project time and expense reports.

KDMD management has worked with the CTO and the CO through the personnel approval process. During the first 6 months, KDMD has added 3 new full-time QED employees and a part-time IRG staff member.

Subcontractor and vendor management is also integral to the working of KDMD. KDMD Management is responsible for contract management for our subcontractors and resource firms including:

IRG
TRG
Siren Digital Communications, LLC
Tomoye
WaldoWare
Project Design

Internally, KDMD management reports to the QED Vice-President for Economic Growth & Governance through monthly contract review and periodic meetings and reports.

In addition to financial reporting, the KDMD team reports programmatically through bi-weekly Work in Progress (WIP) meetings. KDMD also prepares this Semi-Annual Progress report. KDMD Staff continually coordinate and communicate with the MD contractors, grantees and other partners collaborating on knowledge sharing, knowledge dissemination and training activities.