



**EducAcción Project**  
**Quarterly Progress Report**

**April 1, 2012 – June 30, 2012**



*Submitted by:*  
American Institutes for Research

*With:*  
CARE Honduras  
Catholic Relief Services Honduras  
ChildFund Honduras  
Fundación Aned  
Fundación para la Educación Ricardo Ernesto Maduro Andreu (FEREMA)  
Save the Children Honduras

U.S. Agency for International Development  
Cooperative Agreement No. AID-522-A-11-00003

## **SUMMARY OF THE PROJECT**

Title of Project: Teacher-Citizen Participation Program (Proyecto EducAcción)

Prime Contractor: American Institutes for Research (AIR)

Cooperative Agreement No.: AID-522-A-11-00003

Reporting Period: April 1, 2012-June 30, 2012

Budget: \$21,300,524

Start Date: July 7, 2011

End Date: July 6, 2016

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## **I. Project Summary**

On July 2011, the American Institutes for Research (AIR) was awarded a Cooperative Agreement from USAID/Honduras to implement the Teacher-Citizen Participation Project (*Proyecto EducAcción* in Spanish), a 5-year project with an estimated budget of \$21,300,524 in federal funds.

This project represents the second phase of USAID support to the “Education for All – Fast Track Initiative (EFA-FTI)” in Honduras, in cooperation with the Government of Honduras (GOH), civil society, private sector, and other donors working toward the EFA goals to be achieved by 2015.

The Project builds on the work of USAID’s MIDEH/EQUIP2 Project (2005-2011), a partnership with the Honduran Ministry of Education (SE) in support of the achievement of EFA-FTI and Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) goals.

With the support of that project and the USAID EQUIP1/MIDEH and EQUIP3/METAS Projects and others, Honduras made important strides toward reaching EFA and PRS goals, but also experienced significant setbacks. The June 2009 coup d’état and the resulting political instability demonstrated the limitations of depending only on government structures. These institutions displayed profound institutional weaknesses and levels of politicization which had serious and negative effects on the educational system. A shortened 2009 school year, the institution of automatic promotion in 2009, a significant number of school days lost in 2010 and 2011 due to political unrest and teachers’ strikes, and the use of education sector jobs for partisan purposes limited educational opportunities for Honduran students.

EducAcción, therefore, emphasizes a new focus on enabling and empowering parents and community members to become agents of change who work together with teachers, principals, and local government authorities to identify, advocate for, and implement actions to advance educational quality. The EducAcción team is committed to working with and through the SE and building capacity and ownership, while also recognizing the need for efforts to ensure that parents, students, and community members are able to improve educational quality and to hold government accountable for fulfilling its commitments and obligations.

## **II. Objectives and Results**

EducAcción contributes to USAID/Honduras Assistance Objective 3 (Better Educated People), Intermediate Results 3.1 (Improved Quality of Educational Delivery Systems), and 3.2 (Increased Access to Educational Opportunities).

Project activities fall within the below Sub-intermediate Results:

- 3.1.1 Improved Efficiency of Educational Delivery Systems
- 3.1.2 More Effective Teaching
- 3.1.4 Increased Community Involvement
- 3.2.1 Pre-School Coverage Expanded

Project activities are developed under the two EducAcción program results: Result 1, Continued Support to Reach EFA Goals, and Result 2, Strengthened Community Participation in Education.

### **III. Project Structure**

Prime contractor AIR, in partnership with six partners, leads the EducAcción Project. Partner organizations are CARE Honduras, ChildFund Honduras, CRS Honduras, FEREMA, Fundación ANED, and Save the Children.

The project focuses on the municipality as the area of intervention. EducAcción will reach 120 municipalities, in 3 cohorts of approximately 40 each, during the 5 years of implementation (each cohort will receive 3 years of technical support). The Project team will work particularly closely with the Municipal Councils for Educational Development (COMDEs).

Five of the implementation partners (Save the Children, CRS Honduras, CARE Honduras, ChildFund Honduras, and Fundación ANED) directly implement activities at the municipal level, working in assigned municipalities.

FEREMA provides technical leadership in the area of strategic planning and pre-school education; CARE provides technical leadership in gender issues, ChildFund in teacher professional development, and CRS in conflict resolution and the culture of peace. As such, most project partners are municipal level implementers, providers of technical assistance to the project as a whole, and also beneficiaries of technical assistance from partner organizations. AIR is responsible for the overall management of the project, the achievement of results, and the technical quality of implementation.

### **IV. Activities During the Quarter**

The project activities during the quarter, described below, have been divided into two groups for this report: those that are strategic and those that are technical. Technical activities are organized according to the two Project Results.

#### *4.1. Strategic activities*

Main strategic activities undertaken during this period include:

- Analysis of the number of schools and students served directly and indirectly by the project in each of the target municipalities. Based on this analysis, plans were made to serve 30% of the schools (reaching 70% of student enrollment). This proposal extends to the municipalities of the next cohort as well.
- Recruitment, hiring and orientation of new project staff, including the new finance manager and the community participation advisor.

- Coordination with other donors in the sector. Arrangements have been established to coordinate with the civil society organization “Transformemos Honduras” to integrate efforts to provide an independent monitoring of the number of class days and to collaborate in the communications campaign. The project team has also made agreements to coordinate work with Project PROEFA-GIZ, taking into consideration the upcoming geographical overlap in areas of implementation and PROEFA-GIZ’s experience in developing school plans (PECs).
- Discussion and analysis with other USAID projects, including USAID projects involved in the Governance/ Decentralization Sector (Nexos, PROPARQUE, DDE and ULATS) and the Education Sector (MIDEH and METAS) in order to coordinate assistance to municipalities in cases where there is a technical or geographic overlap. One concrete result is demonstrated in the plans for selection of municipalities of intervention for the second and third EducAcción cohorts, with a preference for municipalities where there is the presence of other USAID-funded projects.
- Selection of municipalities for the second and third cohort. As reported in the previous report, several criteria were defined and used as the basis of selection. After applying these criteria, the selected municipalities were analyzed by each of the implementing organizations.

With the approval of the Director of the USAID Mission, first the criteria of low educational attainment and high crime rate were applied. The second criteria considered, with a lower weighted value, were the presence of other USAID projects and the presence of EducAcción partner NGOs. Based on this, clusters of intervention were defined (to improve cost effectiveness). After this pre-selection of municipalities, the project proposal is presented to the municipalities and the resulting agreements determine the final selection of municipalities.

The 120 project municipalities are expected to be distributed throughout fourteen departments (all departments except Copán, Ocotepeque, Lempira, and the Bay Islands). The list of municipalities is included as Annex 1.

## *4.2. Technical Activities*

During the quarter, the EducAcción team continued to implement the 2012 workplan. The main activities implemented under each project result are described below.

### *4.2.1. Result 1: Continued support to reach EFA goals*

#### Activity summary

- *Capacity building in the development, monitoring and implementation of municipal level teacher training plans.* In Atlántida and Gracias a Dios, school principals, Ministry of education (SE) District Directors, and classroom teachers were trained in the preparation

of municipal plans for teacher training, resulting in the development of plans in seven municipalities. Teacher training plans include topics such as the communicative approach to teaching language, the problem-solving approach in math instruction, gender considerations, and peace-building, among others.

- *Capacity building for principals and teachers.* During the reporting period 1,141 teachers and 556 school principals were trained. Teacher trainers in mathematics and Spanish have been trained in the 36 municipalities of the first cohort and now train other teachers in both subjects in targeted schools. 380 school principals were trained in providing educational support, and most now provide teaching support at the school level. SE personnel, including District Directors, district-level Technical Assistants, and classroom teachers were trained in educational indicators, their importance, and their relationship to Municipal Education Plans.

A training plan for SE District Directors, Departmental Directors and other stakeholders (school principals, municipal authorities, and other members of the COMDEs), focused on developing capacity in analyzing and using data and making data-driven decisions is under development.

- *Monitoring availability and use of DCNB-support materials.* The project team has learned that there are 60 schools located in the municipalities of Valle, served directly by the project, that have educational standards and pacing guides, but lack textbooks for Mathematics and Spanish, as well as diagnostic and formative tests. A similar situation occurs in schools directly served by the project in Francisco Morazán and Comayagua. During this reporting period, project staff verified the availability of materials in SE District and Departmental offices; there was a severe shortage in Choluteca, Atlántida, and Gracias a Dios.

The project team reported that in the municipality of Juan Francisco Bulnes, the mayor provided the schools with diagnostic tests. He also organized a Board of Education with the participation of the Governor, District Directors, Chief Departmental Representative, EducAcción, and representatives of the Teachers' Union and non-government organizations. The Board then analyzed the educational situation of the municipality, pledging to promote the use of formative and end-of-grade tests in schools in the municipality.

#### *4.2.2. Result 2: Strengthened community participation in education*

##### Activity summary

- *Technical assistance to municipal councils for educational development (COMDES) and customized training and support provided to COMDES.* During this period, continuous technical support was provided to the 40 first cohort municipalities in the development of municipal education strategic plans and monitoring of educational indicators and annual

operating plan implementation. Additionally, a guide defining the role of the COMDE coordinator was developed.

With the exception of municipalities in Choluteca, the municipalities that make up the first cohort all have an established COMDE and are developing or updating the municipal-level strategic plan for educational development. In Atlántida and Gracias a Dios, the seven municipalities of intervention have a strategic plan for educational development, and three of the seven currently have an annual operating plan. However, only one of the municipalities mentioned has a monitoring plan which includes municipal-level education indicators.

In the municipalities of Francisco Morazán and Comayagua, 124 COMDE members were trained in strategic and operational planning. Training participants belonged to 11 different COMDEs and one District Council for Educational Development (CODDE) served by the project. To date, six of these municipalities have a strategic plan for educational development, and five are in the process of developing their plan. None have monitoring plans which include educational indicators.

In project municipalities in Valle, five COMDES are organized. Three have municipal level plans and annual operating plans, and have been directly involved in the structuring of 56 school development committees, six of which are in the process of implementing a school development plan.

Training has been provided to 44 COMDE members from twelve intervention municipalities in Choluteca and Olancho. The training content focuses on the establishment and functioning of COMDEs. Of the twelve municipalities, eight are now supporting the creation of school-level development plans.

- *Technical assistance and support for the organization and/or strengthening of CODECOs and support to CODECOs for development and implementation of work plans.* The team completed the development and validation of a guide for the organization and operation of the School Development Councils (CEDs). In Atlántida and Gracias a Dios, 32 CEDs are being advised by the Project on issues related to the roles and functions of its members and preparation of school plans and annual operating plans (AOPs). To date, 9 of them have developed AOPs. In the project municipalities in Francisco Morazán and Comayagua, 396 members of CEDs were trained in their roles and the development of the AOP during the quarter. During this period, 70 CEDs have been organized or reorganized, and 50 of these have their respective AOP based on the school-level plan.
- *Municipal-level incentive programs to encourage school-level improvement and recognition for performance.* To date, 12 municipalities in Olancho and Choluteca and 12 municipalities in Francisco Morazán and Comayagua have developed and implemented incentive programs to support rural disadvantaged children. The programs provide scholarships to children and youth at risk of dropping out.

- *Extension of Construction of Peace pilot program.* Eighteen municipal teams have been established and trained in the culture of peace. The assistance and advice visits undertaken by municipal teams are guided by a strategy document containing the conceptual and strategic guidelines for technical support. It also includes tools and instruments to obtain and share information and to help overcome identified needs.
- *Phase II of Educación Nos Cambia La Vida media campaign.* During this period, partnerships related to the media campaign were developed with several institutions, including COHEP, Project MIDEH, Transformemos Honduras, and the Ministry of Education. The purpose of these alliances is to coordinate the design, implementation and promotion of the second phase of the campaign "*La Educación Nos Cambia La Vida.*" An Advisory Committee composed of Directors of each institution and an Operating Committee composed of appointees by each institution were formed. A creative brief was developed, and includes information on the purpose of the campaign, the targeted public, and main ideas/slogans. This is the basis upon which the creative designer will elaborate a draft proposal for the campaign.
- *Training and orientation of CCEPREB volunteer educators.* During this period, 56 volunteer educators from Valle, Choluteca, Francisco Morazán, Olancho, and Comayagua were trained in the *Juego y Aprendo* methodology and CCEPREB management.
- *Pilot scholarship program to support 6<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> grade transition.* In the project municipalities in Choluteca, an incentive program was implemented for 7th, 8th and 9th grade. This is managed by the COMDEs and aims to promote access to the third cycle of basic education by supporting the enrollment of youth in the alternative delivery program EDUCATODOS.
- *Training of project facilitators on concepts of gender and training of municipal, local and school personnel to incorporate gender issues.* Seven municipal training teams were formed. These teams identify strategies to promote gender equity and to influence other actors in the educational and local community in terms of gender equity, and particularly in applying gender-sensitive pedagogy in the classroom. Gender training teams are composed of a community facilitator, a pedagogical facilitator, a representative of the municipal women's office, a mother and a father from a school community, three teachers from the targeted schools, and a COMDE representative.

### Challenges and perspectives

Teacher strikes were a challenge to the successful implementation of activities under this result during this period. Strikes resulted in the re-scheduling of activities and/or low attendance in some of the activities implemented by the EducAcción team.

### 4.2.3. Project monitoring and evaluation

#### Activity summary

- The baseline for the first cohort of municipalities was carried out. Survey data was collected using the instruments created, and data entry was completed. An analysis plan was developed and data analysis is currently taking place.
- The system for collecting and managing project trainee information was designed and is being validated. Due to this ongoing process, the data presented in this report does not include all participant data. The next report will include complete data from participants in the first year of the project's implementation.
- Terms of reference for baseline data collection in the second cohort of municipalities were developed and published.

#### Challenges and perspectives

The baseline survey is essential for determining project achievements. Data collection must be done before the start of operations in the municipalities or, at most, within the first months of entry for each new cohort of municipalities. However, project experience to date shows that the monitoring and evaluation staff of partner NGOs need to dedicate more time and attention to ensuring the quality of the information obtained.

## **V. Results**

*[Annual report only (Q3 every year)]*

### **VI. Number of Participants Trained**

The list of participants trained is attached in Annex 2; the next report will include complete data from all participants for the first year of the project.

### **VII. Activities Planned for Next Quarter**

- Start-up of operations in the second cohort of municipalities (44 municipalities). Activities will include the hiring and training of new staff, the signing of agreements with each municipal government, and the application of the approach with the COMDEs and SE District personnel.
- Anticipated finalization of arrangements with CARE to begin municipal-level implementation in a portion of the second cohort municipalities, as well as for AIR to contract additional technical staff and implement directly in some municipalities.

- Validation of the tools for developing, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating the teacher training curricula.
- Strengthening of COMDES in cohort one and cohort two municipalities by identifying the level of advancement in organization, planning, and implementing of strategic plans; customized training and support to COMDEs as needed.
- Organization of an exchange event between COMDEs in order to share successful experiences.
- Technical support in active teaching methodologies and participatory and flexible assessment processes.
- Information gathering on availability of DCNB support materials, facilitation of DCNB materials supply where possible, and technical assistance for their effective use.
- Implementation of pilot grants to support the transition from sixth grade to seventh grade among students from rural areas.
- Provision of support to municipalities in identifying and establishing partnerships with public and private sectors for the reproduction and distribution of consumable goods for CCEPREBs.
- Development of proposal for the design of the media campaign "*Educación Nos Cambia La Vida.*" The proposal will include recorded radio and TV spots and printed material.

### **VIII. Lessons Learned and Recommendations**

- The involvement of numerous partners in implementation has the potential to create confusion among stakeholders at the local level. Based on experience to date, a more realistic programming and sequencing of activities and better coordination between NGO partners has been developed for second cohort operations.
- Given the SE's prohibition on teachers participating in workshops during school hours, the project team will need to pursue other strategies with the district and municipal education directors in order to balance the guidelines of the Ministry of Education, the needs of teachers, and EducAcción project objectives. One alternative, for example, is to have substitute teachers teach when a teacher facilitator has to attend training workshops. A replacement may be voluntary or receive a financial incentive.
- Recent changes in the upper levels of the Ministry of Education and the instability caused by the attempt to change departmental level SE staff had no strong negative impact on project activities, reflecting one benefit of the project's focus on the municipal level and on mechanisms of community participation.

- The overall project monitoring and evaluation function is the responsibility of AIR, but there is still a need to better define the roles of the partner NGO m&e staff working for the project, especially given the diverse professional profiles of these staff.

## Annex 1: EducAcción municipalities of intervention <sup>1</sup>

Departamento	Cohorte I	Cohorte II	Cohorte III
<b>Atlántida</b>	El Porvenir Jutiapa La Masica San Francisco	La Ceiba	
<b>Colón</b>		Sabá Tocoa Bonito Oriental	Trujillo Irióna Santa Rosa de Aguán Limón
<b>Comayagua</b>	Esquíás La Libertad San Jerónimo Siguatepeque	Comayagua El Rosario Meámbar Taulabé	
<b>Cortés</b>	Omoa Puerto Cortés San Antonio de Cortés San Manuel		San Pedro Sula (2 distritos) Choloma (2 distrito)
<b>Choluteca</b>	Choluteca Concepción de María El Corpus Marcovia Namasigüe Orocuina San Marcos de Colón	El Triunfo Pespire Santa Ana de Yusguare	
<b>El Paraíso</b>			Yuscarán Danlí El Paraíso Jacalepa Morocelí

<sup>1</sup> Cohort III municipalities are anticipated municipalities

Departamento	Cohorte I	Cohorte II	Cohorte III
<b>Francisco Morazán</b>	Tegucigalpa (Distrito 8) Curarén Lepaterique Ojojona Sabanagrande San Antonio de Oriente Cantarranas Reitoca	Villa de San Francisco	Tegucigalpa (10 y otro por definir) Tatumbala
<b>Gracias a Dios</b>	Puerto Lempira Brus Laguna Juan Francisco Bulnes	Ahuas Villeda Morales Wampusirpi	
<b>Intibucá</b>		La Esperanza Intibucá Jesús de Otoro Masaguara San Isidro San Juan San Miguelito Yamaranguila San Francisco de Opalaca	
<b>La Paz</b>		Cabañas Marcala Chinacla Santa Ana Santa Elena Yarula	Guajiquire Opatoro San José Santa María Santiago de Puringla
<b>Olancho</b>	Juticalpa Campamento Catacamas San Francisco de Becerra Santa María del Real	San Francisco de la Paz	Gualaco San Esteban  San Vicente Centenario San Nicolás
<b>Santa Bárbara</b>		Santa Bárbara Arada Atima Nuevo Celilac San Francisco de Ojuera	Concepción del Sur Chinda Ceguaca San José de Colinas San Luis Trinidad Ilama San Pedro Zacapa
<b>Valle</b>	Amapala Goascorán Langue San Francisco de Coray San Lorenzo	Nacaome Alianza	
<b>Yoro</b>		El Negrito El Progreso (2) Santa Rita Olanchito	Yoro Sulaco Victoria Morazán

## Annex 2. List of trainees

Municipality	CCPREB Volunteers		Education administrators and officials		Teacher		Total Female	Total Male
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male		
Brus Laguna			0	1	0	1	0	2
Campamento	24	1	0	1	0	1	24	3
Cantarranas			20	2	65	2	85	4
Catacamas	21	1	6	1	15	2	42	4
Choluteca	6	1	4	1	29	2	39	4
Concepción de María	3	1	0	1	47	2	50	4
Corpus	5	1					5	1
Curarén			59	4	48	2	107	6
Distrito Central			41	3	137	3	178	6
El Corpus			2	2	60	2	62	4
El Porvenir			0	1			0	1
Esquías			59	3	76	3	135	6
Juan Francisco Bulnes			1	1	1	1	2	2
Jutiapa			0	1			0	1
Juticalpa	13	2	4	1	12	3	29	6
La Libertad			45	3	34	3	79	6
La Masica			1	1	0	1	1	2
Lepaterique			62	2	73	3	135	5
Marcovia	4	1	3	1	27	2	34	4
Namasigüe	3	1	1	1	26	2	30	4
Ojojona			17	3	24	3	41	6
Orocuina	3	1	1	1	34	2	38	4
Puerto Lempira			1	1	1		2	1
Reitoca			24	2	47	3	71	5
Sabanagrande			43	3	60	2	103	5
San Antonio de Oriente			18	3	40	3	58	6
San Francisco			1	2			1	2
San Francisco de Becerra	20	1	7	1	34	2	61	4
San Jerónimo			54	3	51	3	105	6
San Juan de Flores			1	2			1	2
San Marcos de Colón	1	1	4	1	54	2	59	4
Santa María del Real	14	1	2	1	5	2	21	4
Siguatepeque			29	2	81	3	110	5
<b>Total general</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>510</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>1081</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>1708</b>	<b>129</b>