



EducAcción Project
Quarterly Progress Report

January 1, 2012-March 31, 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

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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: January 1, 2012-March 31, 2012

Budget: \$21,300,524

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End Date: July 6, 2016

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

AHMON	Honduran Association of Municipalities
AIR	American Institutes for Research
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
COMDE	Municipal Committees for Educational Development
CED	Community Committees for Educational Development
DCNB	Diseño Curricular Nacional Básico (National Curriculum)
EFA-FTI	Education for All – Fast Track Initiative
GOH	Government of Honduras
IBE	Intercultural Bilingual Education
INICE	Instituto Nacional de Investigación y Capacitación Educativa (National Institute for Educational Research and Training)
PEC	School Strategic Plan
PRS	Poverty Reduction Strategy
SE	The Honduran Ministry of Education
TALULAR	Teaching and Learning Using Locally Available Resources

Project Summary

In 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 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 risks and limitations of depending only on the SE and other 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 2009, 2010, and 2011 due to political unrest and teachers’ strikes, and the use of education sector jobs for partisan purposes have compromised 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.

I. 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.

II. Project Structure

The EducAcción Project is led by prime contractor AIR, in partnership with six implementing organizations: CARE Honduras, ChildFund Honduras, CRS Honduras, FEREMA, Fundación Aned, and Save the Children Honduras.

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 Municipal Councils for Educational Development (COMDES).

Five of the implementation partners (Save the Children, CRS Honduras, CARE Honduras, ChildFund Honduras, and Fundación Aned) are expected to 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.

Project partners are municipal level implementers, providers of technical assistance to the project as a whole, and also are 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.

III. Activities Implemented During the Quarter

3.1. Strategic activities

The main strategic activities implemented during this quarter included:

- The definition of criteria for the selection of second cohort municipalities, including repetition and drop-out rate, enrollment rate in third cycle and high school, 6th grade graduation rate, academic achievement in Mathematics and Spanish in the 1st and 2nd cycles, crime rate, presence of complementary USAID programs and NGO implementers, and accessibility and clustering.
- The finalization and adoption of the technical leadership strategies for: gender, teacher training, culture of peace, preschool education, and strategic planning.

- The selection of target schools in each of the municipalities of intervention, taking into consideration criteria such as student enrollment from 1st to 9th grade and age five population and educational coverage for the student population of that age.
- Visits to target schools in order to socialize the objectives, results and activities to be implemented with the Project and perform diagnostics on the needs and conditions of the schools.
- Technical accompaniment and supervision in the field of the Pedagogic and Community Facilitators (6 of the 8 teams) in 14 municipalities of intervention. The technical supervision focused on the approach to the beneficiaries as well as the technical approach with respect to each of the technical areas.
- Municipal Teams in support of the quality of education have been established to ensure the sustainability of the processes implemented to improve the quality of education in the municipalities of Atlántida and Gracias a Dios.

3.2. Technical/ Implementation Activities

3.2.1. Result 1: Continued support to reach EFA goals

Activities summary

The main activities related to this result are described below:

- Design, validation and implementation of the training modules in Spanish and Mathematics for teacher facilitators, who in turn train other teachers in the classroom. Teachers from 36 municipalities as well as INICE participated. The modules are being implemented and validated; to date there have been two training sessions, one in Spanish and another in Math, with each municipality.
- Design and validation of the pedagogic support module for District Directors, municipal directors, school administrative staff, and Project pedagogic facilitators, to assist in monitoring the new approaches and constructivist methodology in the classroom. The validation was performed with District Directors and Municipal Educational Center Directors, Project facilitators, and INICE staff.
- Distribution of supplementary DCNB teaching materials, which benefited 21 schools located in the municipalities of Ojojona, Reitoca, Sabanagrande and Lepaterique, and 28 schools in the municipalities of Juticalpa, San Francisco de Becerra, Campamento, Santa Maria del Real and Catacamas. Many of these materials were located in the offices of the District and Departmental Directorates of Education and were part of the deliveries made by the EQUIP2/MIDEH Project.

- Monitoring of the availability and use of the teaching support materials for the DCNB in the classroom was initiated in the municipalities of the Project's intervention. Results are expected next quarter.
- Capacity building for the development, implementation and monitoring of teacher training municipal plans developed in 12 municipalities by the District and Municipal Directors with the support of Math, Spanish and pre-school teachers, technical assistants and project facilitators. These teacher training plans are based on the Departmental Plan and are currently under discussion and approval by the local authorities of the Ministry of Education and the COMDEs.
- Training sessions with district level SE staff, including training with District Directors of five municipalities in EGRA test application and training in the development of Annual Operating Plans for District Directors, Technical Assistants, and School Directors.

Achievements

- Increased availability of DCNB support materials in 22 schools located in four municipalities of Francisco Morazán.
- Other achievements associated with training in and use of the DCNB in the classroom and the supplementary materials, such as improved teaching and classroom instruction in Math and Spanish, will be reported in upcoming quarters.

Challenges and perspectives

During the period of this report the main challenges and perspectives for future work include the following:

- Challenges in pedagogic support for teachers are numerous and include the lack of transportation and infrastructure for the District Directors and Municipal Directors to reach schools, as well as a lack of communicative and problem solving approaches. Both of these factors hinder support to teachers. In upcoming quarters the Project will strengthen the capacities of district and municipal directors in approaches to ensure effective educational support, and also work with higher education authorities in order to address problems in resources and transport to reach schools.

3.2.2. Result 2: Strengthened community participation in education

Activities summary

The activities implemented during this period related to this result are described below:

- 40 COMDEs benefited from the project's intervention with respect to community participation and the roles and responsibilities of COMDE members. During the

assistance given, it was discovered that the COMDEs have different levels of organization and operation; some have a Municipal Strategic Education Plan developed (33), and others have an annual operating plan that guide their activities (19). To date, none of the Municipal Education Strategic Plans includes a monitoring plan of the activities and educational indicators in the municipality. The Project will assist in the development of these tools.

- Training in community participation and strategic and operational planning was provided to 35 members of the COMDEs representing 24 municipalities in the departments of Gracias a Dios, Atlántida, Francisco Morazán, Comayagua, Choluteca, and Valle.
- In coordination with the Ministry of Education, 4 guides were prepared for training and technical assistance to COMDEs: Guide 1, Organization of Community Involvement in Education; Guide 2, Planning for the Educational Development of the Municipality; Guide 3, Monitoring of the Strategic Plan; and Guide 4, Educational Management. Additionally, other tools were developed for COMDE use, such as an instrument to revise the strategic plans and an instrument to monitor educational indicators.
- The Project supported the establishment of Development Boards of Education (CED) in 32 schools and an equal number of communities. Most of the schools in the municipalities served by the project have not formed their respective CED. In the upcoming months the Project team will continue assisting the development of Education Plans (PEC) and Specific Projects (PE), among other activities related to the role of CED in the schools.
- At least 12 COMDEs have included in their 2012 POAs an incentive program to promote the transition from grade 6 to 7, and 7 additional COMDES have established incentive programs, even though they have not been included in their POA. All of them have developed the relevant regulations for implementation. These programs support continued student enrollment in basic and high school education and educational opportunities through EDUCATODOS and an alternative education experience developed in the Department of Santa Barbara.
- Training for volunteers of CCEPREB: in coordination with Project *Educatrachos* and in support of the SE, a Facilitator's Guide for the Educators workshops, a tool to be used in the workshops for the CCEPREB volunteer educators, was developed.
- CCEPREB training workshops focused on "Juego y Aprendo" and active participatory methodologies were conducted in 14 municipalities. During the next quarter this training will be completed for the remaining municipalities.
- A total of 45 people were trained in gender awareness during the induction process of the project's staff, including project managers, community facilitators and educational services and staff responsible for the technical leadership. The topics included in this training were: role assignments, gender behaviors, gender discrimination, gender violence, decision making and gender awareness.

- Criteria for the formation of eight teams of trainers in gender, in eight municipalities of the first cohort, were defined. The members of these teams are: Project facilitators, representatives of the municipal office of women, mothers and fathers of students, teachers of the targeted schools, and representatives of the COMDEs. Interviews were also conducted with former team members of training teams and staff from INICE and INAM in order to design the instruments and define the content to be used in the training process. These trainings will be held starting in the second quarter of this year.
- Expansion of the peace building program, including an induction in the topic of peace building for project technical and management staff. Additionally, 16 facilitator teachers, 15 members of the COMDEs, and 13 community volunteers were trained in the culture of peace and the development of social integration plans.
- The systematization of previous experiences in the Culture of Peace program implemented in the past MIDEH project.

Achievements

The main achievements during this period for result two were as follows:

- Greater clarity about the role played by the COMDE in the educational development of the municipality, and progress in the development of the annual operating plan and the municipality's plan for teacher training.
- Other achievements related to the increase and access to quality education, such as initiatives at the municipal level to increase educational quality in schools, improved understanding of responsibilities and rights in education, and improvements in the collection of information at a local level, will be reported in the following quarterly reports.

Challenges and perspectives

The main challenges and perspectives for future work related to this result are described below:

- Pre-School Education

In relation to increased enrollment in pre-school the following difficulties have been identified:

- There is no secure and agile mechanism to pay for CCEPREB community educators, causing drop-out and reduced motivation among the educators.
- The Ministry of Education has recommended that any CCEPREB with less than 8 children should not operate, leading to the closure of several. The project will support activities to address this situation so that children in small communities with less than 8 children of this age are not left out. These may include training parents and/or a cadre of “travelling” community educators.

- Given the passage of the new law to strengthen public education and community participation, various support tools have been developed by actors at different levels. It is necessary to coordinate these instruments so they complement each other. For example, there must be an efficient relationship between the PEEM, POA for 2012, the Municipality's teacher training plan and the monitoring tools for such plans.
- It is necessary to boost (advising and training) the participation of civil society sectors in the COMDEs, especially parents, as well as sectors of the population who are recipients/customers of educational services, so they have a more active and empowered role.

3.2.3. Monitoring and evaluation

Activities summary

The activities associated with monitoring and evaluations which were implemented during this quarter are described below:

- Adjustments to Project's indicators in the Monitoring Plan: adjustments to the indicators provided greater clarity on the aspects to be measured, and comments on gender were incorporated.
- Validation of the tools needed to gather information for seven of the indicators which require primary information: for the field validation, teachers, parents, sixth grade students, COMDE members and members of CEDs were interviewed. Additionally, instruments for classroom observations and the use of DCNB materials and gender pedagogy were validated.
- Design of the statistical sample, selection of the sampling frame, and systematic selection of schools participating in the baseline.
- The start of the Baseline Survey in the municipalities of the first cohort, conducted by the monitoring and evaluation staff of the Project. This activity will last until mid-May.

Achievements

The main achievement related to monitoring and evaluation is described below:

- Completion of the gathering of information in 11 municipalities: four in the Department of Atlántida, three in the Department of Comayagua, three in Valle, and a municipality in Olancho.

Challenges and perspectives

Among the main challenges and future tasks are:

- The completion of a robust database for the entry of information concerning the baseline as well as for the entry of the list of participants of the training provided by the project. This database should be managed remotely so that those responsible for monitoring and evaluation may enter the information from their offices, and will provide accurate information on training participants.
- Completion of the baseline survey and tabulation and analysis of the results. This is expected to be completed by the end of June. The results of this survey will be reported in the next quarterly report.
- The monitoring activities related to educational attainment in the municipalities will begin in July.

IV. Results

The results of the implementation of the project are linked to the performance indicators, which will be reported annually and will be included in the report that corresponds to the third quarter of this year.

V. Number of Participants Trained

Currently a database to record participants in each of the training events is under development. An estimation of the number of people trained by the project during this period (who completed at least a minimum of 16 hours training) is attached in Annex 1 and Annex 2. More detailed data will be reported in the next report.

VI. Activities Planned for Next Quarter

The main activities planned for the next quarter are described below:

- Result 1 “Continued support to reach EFA goals”
 - Implementation of the module of educational support for Directors and Assistants of the Districts and Municipalities.
 - Training of teachers in Math and Spanish in the classroom by facilitators.
 - Capacity building for the development, monitoring, and implementation of municipal plans for teacher training.

- Support to COMDEs, CEDs and the Board of Directors in distributing DCNB materials to schools.
- Monitoring the use and availability of DCNB teaching materials.
- With regard to Result 2 “Strengthened community participation in education”
 - Conformation and training of the facilitator teams for the Culture of Peace and Gender areas. Support for facilitator teachers as they train others and implement both approaches in the targeted schools.
 - Advising COMDES on strategic planning, operational planning, educational indicators, and monitoring progress of the Municipal Strategic Education Plan.
 - Advising on the formation of CEDs in the targeted schools, and training CED members in the development, monitoring, and implementation of PECs.
 - Training and orientation of CCEPREB volunteers in the “Juego y Aprendo” methodology.

VII. Lessons Learned and Recommendations

- The project’s large-scale operations in the field began at this start of the school year; in the future it would be beneficial to devote at least three months prior to the start of the school year to strengthening local participation processes and the preparation of teacher training and support with local educational authorities.
- Strengthening of technical staff will need to continue. A workshop for pedagogical facilitators and community participation staff is being considered for mid-2012, to ensure the implementation and monitoring of the technical content areas that are being introduced.
- The schedule for the allocation of project grants/incentives should be established and be focused on rural schools, and those with serious financial needs and strong motivation to grow. Coordination with other programs that exist at the municipal level is important in order to integrate available resources to generate greater impact and to establish a basis for sustainability of the incentive programs. It is important to evaluate the desirability of influencing expansion of the educational opportunities in the third cycle as a more sustainable alternative, instead of directly assigning resources to a particular family.
- The current operation of the COMDEs, the basic structure of educational participation at the municipal level, is highly dependent on traditional stakeholders in education. The district and municipal education authorities and representatives of the municipal government appear to be the most active participants. The project should support efforts to ensure the attendance and participation of the sectors of the population which represent the beneficiaries/customers of the education sector, as well as a more qualitative participation.

- In the project design, the project staff members are intended as facilitators of educational management and processes, yet in practice, this team tends to perform tasks that are the responsibility of the educational authorities. This may be caused by the lack of commitment / capacity / logistics of the educational authorities in the municipality to assume responsibility, especially in educational management. The Project will continue to seek options to address these tendencies.

Annex 1. Number of Teachers and Educational Administrators and Officers trained with USG support from January to March 2012

Number of Teachers and Educational Administrators and Officers trained with USG support from January to March 2012

Municipality	Administrators and Officials		Teachers		Total Female	Total Male
	Female	Male	Female	Male		
Amapala			2	1	2	1
Brus Laguna			1	2	1	2
Campamento			1	2	1	2
Cantarranas			16	3	16	3
Catacamas			5	0	5	0
Ceiba			1	0	1	0
Choluteca	1	1	3	1	4	2
Concepción de María			1	2	1	2
Curaren			1	3	1	3
Distrito 8, Distrito Central			17	4	17	4
Distrito Central	6	4			6	4
El Corpus			2	1	2	1
El Porvenir			4	0	4	0
Esquías			12	1	12	1
Goascorán			2	0	2	0
Juan Francisco Bulnes			0	2	0	2
Jutiapa			4	2	4	2
Juticalpa			6	0	6	0
La Libertad			26	9	26	9
La Masica			5	0	5	0
Langue			1	3	1	3
Lepaterique			20	8	20	8
Marcovia			2	1	2	1
Namasigüe			4	1	4	1
Ojojona			23	7	23	7
Orocuina			0	4	0	4
Puerto Lempira			7	4	7	4
Reitoca			6	8	6	8
Sabanagrande			15	6	15	6
San Antonio de Oriente			23	9	23	9
San Francisco			5	1	5	1
San Francisco de Becerra			1	2	1	2
San Francisco de Coray			2	0	2	0
San Jerónimo			10	5	10	5
San Lorenzo			1	2	1	2
San Marcos de Colón	1	0	1	2	2	2
Santa María del Real			2	1	2	1
Siguatepeque			11	9	11	9
Grand Total	8	5	243	106	251	111

Annex 2: Number of Teachers and Educational Administrators and Officers trained with USG support from January to March 2012

Municipality	Administrators and Officials		Teachers		Total Female	Total Male
	Female	Male	Female	Male		
Amapala			2	1	2	1
Brus Laguna			1	2	1	2
Campamento			1	2	1	2
Cantarranas			16	3	16	3
Catacamas			5	0	5	0
Ceiba			1	0	1	0
Choluteca	1	1	3	1	4	2
Concepción de María			1	2	1	2
Curaren			1	3	1	3
Distrito 8, Distrito Central			17	4	17	4
Distrito Central	6	4			6	4
El Corpus			2	1	2	1
El Porvenir			4	0	4	0
Esquías			12	1	12	1
Goascorán			2	0	2	0
Juan Francisco Bulnes			0	2	0	2
Jutiapa			4	2	4	2
Juticalpa			6	0	6	0
La Libertad			26	9	26	9
La Masica			5	0	5	0
Langue			1	3	1	3
Lepaterique			20	8	20	8
Marcovia			2	1	2	1
Namasigüe			4	1	4	1
Ojojona			23	7	23	7
Orocuina			0	4	0	4
Puerto Lempira			7	4	7	4
Reitoca			6	8	6	8
Sabanagrande			15	6	15	6
San Antonio de Oriente			23	9	23	9
San Francisco			5	1	5	1
San Francisco de Becerra			1	2	1	2
San Francisco de Coray			2	0	2	0
San Jerónimo			10	5	10	5
San Lorenzo			1	2	1	2
San Marcos de Colón	1	0	1	2	2	2
Santa María del Real			2	1	2	1
Siguatepeque			11	9	11	9
Grand Total	8	5	243	106	251	111