

PD. ABK-422  
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Swaziland  
Educational Policy, Management, and Technology Project  
Project Number 645-0230

Quarterly Report  
for the Period  
1 August - 31 October 1990

EDUCATIONAL POLICY, MANAGEMENT AND TECHNOLOGY PROJECT.

QUARTERLY REPORT  
FOR THE PERIOD 1 AUGUST 1990 - 31 OCTOBER 1990.

INTRODUCTION:

This report covers the first three months of implementation of the project. It contains a report on the activities of the four long term technical assistants and the developments within the components of the project for which they are responsible plus a report from the short term consultant on Career Guidance and Counselling.

At the end of the report is a section highlighting the major problems which need solving in order for the project to develop in the way and at the pace envisaged in the United States Agency for International Development's contract with the Institute for International Research and the Work Plans submitted by the Technical Assistance team.

THE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TEAM.

The Technical Assistance Team consists of the following personnel:

- Mr. Roy Thompson - Chief of Party and Organisation and Management Advisor.
- Dr. Rick Johnson - Management Information Systems Advisor.
- Dr. Harold Bergsma - Management Training Advisor.
- Mrs Aida Passigna - Continuous Assessment Advisor.

The short-term consultant for Career Guidance and Counselling who spent two weeks working with the Educational Testing, Guidance and Psychological Services in October 1990 was Dr Lily Chu.

Joanne Capper arrived on a short term consultancy on 25th October to conduct criterion referenced testing workshops.

Dr. Paul Spector, the Principal Investigator for IIR, made three short term visits to advise the Technical Assistance Team. The first visit was at the beginning of the project, the second visit was mid-September and the third was in late October covering the period of the Inaugural Conference.

Each technical assistant has been matched with a Ministry of Education counterpart as follows:

Mr Roy Thompson - Mr Cramner Magagula - Acting Chief Inspector of Schools (Primary)

Dr Rick Johnson - Mr Elphas Dlamini - Acting Director, Research & Planning Unit

Dr Harold Bergsma - Mrs Irma Allen - Director, In Service Unit.

Mrs Aida Passigna - Mrs Daphne Dlamini - Acting Director, National Curriculum Centre.

The Chief of Party also works with the Principal Secretary, the Under-Secretary and the Director of Education on major issues.

#### PROJECT MANAGEMENT.

The Chief of Party began work in Swaziland on 10th August 1990 after spending the beginning of the month in preparation for the project.

The initial two weeks in Swaziland were spent in settling in and holding preparatory discussions with USAID and MOE staff and in team discussions.

Roy Thompson and Rick Johnson moved into the offices allocated to them in the Ministry of Education on 27th August. Harold Bergsma and Aida Passigna moved to the In-Service Unit and the National Curriculum Centre respectively at the beginning of September.

The Principal Secretary introduced the team to senior officers of the Ministry of Education at a meeting held on 5th September.

Mrs Margaret Kirk was appointed Administrative Assistant on 10th September and Miss Phyllis Mncina as Temporary Project Secretary on 20th September.

A Steering Committee consisting of the Director of Education, the USAID Educational Development Officer and the Chief of Party held its first meeting on 13th September. The Steering Committee is intended to meet every two weeks to discuss developments and consider problems as they arise. Unfortunately it has not been able to meet regularly.

The TA team held several meetings to strategise the development of the Work Plan for the first year of the project and the Life of Project Plan. Draft plans were presented to an MOE Work Group on 2nd October and outstanding issues were discussed at a further meeting on 15th October. The draft plans for the components of the project were approved. The TA team continued to work on the drafts and finalised plans were to be presented to USAID and MOE on 8th November.

Planning and preparations for an inaugural conference began in mid September. The conference was held on 22 and 23 October at the Royal Swazi Convention Centre and was opened by the Minister for Education, Chief Siphon Shongwe.

The acting U.S. Ambassador, the Principal Secretary and the IIR Principal Investigator also addressed the conference. Eighty educators attended the conference and participated in working committee and plenary sessions.

The conference was successful in introducing a large number of people to the project and its objectives and in involving them in considering problems and strategies for its development.

The Chief of Party attended various MOE and USAID meetings during the period including a capital budget planning meeting held at the Foresters Arms and a general staff meeting held on 10th October.

Visits were also made to the Regional Education Offices Hhohho and Lubombo.

#### THE ORGANISATION AND MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME.

The Chief of Party was heavily involved in setting up the project office, planning the inaugural conference, the preparation of the work plans and in general management of the project during the period. Little activity was undertaken in respect to the organisation and management component of the project beyond becoming familiar with the structure and chain of command in the Ministry of Education and the field and in planning future activities. During the next quarter the Chief of Party plans to work with the Management Information Systems Advisor on a school mapping exercise and in a study of the decision making and implementation process in the education system. Seminars for senior MOE staff will also be held.

#### THE MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEM PROGRAMME.

Progress has been made on five of the subtasks related to the work of the MIS specialist.

##### **Identify information currently available within the system.**

During the quarter, the MIS TA located formal and informal reports already in existence. He spoke at length with MOE staff and consultants, and perused libraries at the Ministry of Planning, Central Statistics Office, and the Ministry of Education. He dug through the masses of paper in two storerooms, and searched the handing-over notes of previous projects. In addition, he spoke at length with former MOE employees who offered valuable insights into yet more sources of information.

A lot of information is available, but the accuracy and completeness leaves much to be desired. The statistics sometimes differ in two reports supposedly quoting the same source, and some annual reports either were never written or have completely disappeared.

**Analyze methods and timeliness of processing information.**

All the programs developed by Tracy Harmon, a previous consultant, were collected. Methods and time lines were discussed with Elphas Dlamini, acting Director of RPU, with Cooper Dawson, a MOE consultant, and with D.M. Lukhele, the Government Statistician.

The flow charts and schedules are not being followed. Two reasons account for most of the problem: half the RPU staff have left for better positions elsewhere, and the remainder are vainly trying to prepare budgets for the coming year.

The Central Statistics Office (CSO) gathers information under an Act of Parliament which gives them legal recourse when someone fails to provide timely information. The MOE has no such power, but chafes at the speed with which the CSO relates statistics. In the past, the RPU has made sporadic attempts at collecting its own information. The results, while more timely, differed from the CSO's as a consequence of having been collected at a different time of the school year. This led to some ill will. Worse yet, the respondents had a serious burden as about 90% of the content overlapped between the two questionnaires.

During the reporting period, six meetings were held with CSO staff about the overlap in activities. At the last one, Mr Dlamini and Mr Lukhele agreed to a collaborative effort on collecting education statistics. The CSO will add a single page to their questionnaire to cover the specific additional information the MOE requires. At the end of the annual survey data entry, the CSO will supply the MOE with copies of the raw database. The result should be a lower respondent burden, faster access to results by the MOE, and fewer discrepancies in quoted statistics.

**Find out how information is disseminated and used.**

Most of this activity took place at the inaugural EPMT conference. The consensus was that most educators are unaware of even the few routine reports already available. The most recent annual educational report is from 1988, but few persons knew of its existence.

Inspection of the file creation dates, and last access dates of the files on the computers in the regional offices suggests that there exists plenty of room for progress in dissemination and use. The MIS specialist plans to install a database of school profiles on every administrator's computer by mid-June, 1991 as discussed at the annual conference.

**Prepare estimates of the future school-age population and those in school.**

As part of the policy study on the education system's physical capacity, the MIS specialist prepared estimates of the primary and secondary school population to the end of the century. He obtained a document from the Census Office detailing projections of population growth based upon the 1986 census, and used it to estimate the school-age population to the year 2000. Assuming that the present promotion, repetition and dropout rates continue, he was able to calculate school population figures. As

the EPMT Project intends to decrease dropout and repetition, the statistics are underestimates and growth will be ever greater.

The P.S. for Education reviewed the tables and charts, and asked for additional statistics to take with him to the Commonwealth Minister's Conference in Barbados in late October.

**Provide assistance in MIS and coordinate with other components of EPMT.**

During the quarter, attempts were made to assist the other components, but with limited success. Harold Bergsma needed the names and qualifications of headmasters in the country, but the data are not readily available. The CSO has data for the headmasters, but they are identified only by their Teacher Service Commission number and not by name. The TSC has some data on their computer, but only partial, and the computer is a mini running Unix with only a tape streamer for output; three previous consultants judged the system completely worthless.

**THE CONTINUOUS ASSESSMENT PROGRAMME.**

**THE IDENTIFICATION OF COUNTERPART(S)**

The Director of the National Curriculum Centre (NCC) was designated as the counterpart for the Continuous Assessment Advisor. The Acting Director, Ms Daphne Badelisile Dlamini has, in turn, designated the Centre's Evaluation Unit Head, Mr Tim Nsingwane, to work with the TA on a day to day basis.

During the first few weeks after arrival in the country (Aug. 26-Sept.17,1990), the TA worked mainly with Ms. Dlamini, who reported occasionally to her office even while she was officially on holiday for the second term break.

After returning from his holiday on September 18th, Mr Nsingwane devoted approximately three days of each week planning and working with the TA on CA-related tasks, while Ms. Dlamini spent approximately two days per week participating in the planning and discussion or reviewing documents and preparing for the Project's working group meetings and the inaugural conference.

(Note: The Acting Director and her professional staff are still classified as "teachers" and are entitled to the same school holidays and term breaks as the classroom teachers. Because of this, they are usually not available to work during the school breaks.)

**OFFICE SPACE AND OTHER FACILITIES.**

Due to a lack of office space at the Centre, the TA has been sharing Mr. Nsingwane's office. This office is crowded, with documents piled high on top of whatever counterpart or desktop space is available, and there usually is substantial traffic to and from his office, making it extremely difficult to work or have meetings. To help alleviate the shortage of office space, the NCC has sent a request to the Public Works Department to renovate the typing pool area (enclose and lock) to enable the typists to move out of the office they are currently occupying

into larger room and free up at least one office for the TA. As of the end of October, however, work on the renovation has yet to start.

#### CURRENT STAFFING OF THE ETU

In collaboration with her Swazi counterparts (NCC Acting Director, Head of NCC's Evaluation Unit) the TA finalized three alternative ways in which the proposed professional staff can be organized. The preferred organizational structure requires the following:

- 1 Unit Head .
- 2 Editors (1 for English & 1 for Math)
- 3 Math Testing /Remediation Specialists
- 6 English Testing /Remediation Specialists (3 for Language and 3 for Reading)

The Unit Head and two Editors, who would come from current staff members of the NCC are to devote at least three days out of each week to CA tasks. The nine Testing & Remediation Specialists, who would be recruited from the field (e.g., experienced; trainable teachers seconded to the project) should be fulltime. This level of staffing is necessary because, starting in August 1991, at least two of these specialists will be sent on 6-month internships to educational institutions in the United States which are managing or implementing continuous assessment programmes.

The amount of work that needs to be accomplished each year under the project requires at least two fulltime specialists in each of the three areas (i.e., Math and English Language and Reading). These specialists will be responsible for a host of task that includes: development of the test specifications and test items for the term tests ( with inputs from teachers and other groups through products of workshops on CRT), development of the remediation strategies and materials (with inputs from teachers and other groups through products of workshops on remediation), tryout and revision of materials and procedures (i.e., Learner Verification Review in lab schools and pilot testing in 17 schools), assisting in the training of the trainers, and if necessary, supervising and/or assisting in the training of the headmasters and teachers.

As of the end of this first quarter, the proposed staffing described above has not yet been realized. At the last EPMT Working Group meeting, the Director of Education announced that, for various reasons, the Ministry of Education would not be able to recruit the fulltime staff requested but that a few staff members from the Exams Council and the ETGPS of the Ministry would be seconded, on a parttime basis, to the Educational Testing Unit. A brief meeting with Dr. Ben Dlamini and Mrs. Della Nsibande concluded in the agreement that the two offices would assign five of their staff members (four from the Exams Council and one from the EPTGS) to the ETU. These five are to attend all

the workshops for the ETU and work with the rest of the ETU staff in Manzini on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesday of every work week.

### PROPOSED TEMPORARY OFFICE FOR ETU

One of the USAID/MOE houses near the William Pitcher College has been proposed to house the ETU and the Management training staff until the MOE is able to provide permanent offices for the two groups. A list of furniture required for the temporary office was submitted to Under Secretary Kunene, at his request, after a site visit with the COP.

### WORKPLANS

The proposed annual workplan for the CA component of the project was drawn up in collaboration with the counterparts and presented to the Project's Working Group for deliberation on October 2nd. The Working Group required another meeting, which was held on October 15th, to decide how the Educational Testing Unit(ETU) should be staffed, among other things. The approval of the workplan was contingent upon the identification of the staff members who would undertake the activities outlined in the workplan.

The workplan with the few minor modifications resulting from discussions during the EPMT Working Group meetings, was presented again to the participants of the Project's Inaugural Conference held at the Royal Swazi Convention Centre on October 22 to 23, 1990.

Issues and concerns that some of the participants had about the CA programme were thrashed out and resolved during the working committee sessions and the plenary sessions. The major recommendations included (a) that the ETU staff should be a fulltime staff; (b) that there would be a continued need for fulltime staff for the ETU; and (c) the future roles of the school leaving exams (SPC,JC,etc.) and CA in determining students achievement should be clarified.

### TRAINING

The first training workshop on criterion-referenced testing (for the staff of the ETU,NCC,Senior Inspectors in English and Maths, and Eng./Math lecturers of the William Pitcher College) commenced on the 29th of October and will continue for ten days up to the 9th of November. Joanne Capper, a short-term consultant, is the main presenter at this workshop.

### PLANS FOR THE NEXT QUARTER

The next three months' major activities include the following:

1. Continuation of CRT workshop for ETU,NCC staff, Senior Inspectors for English and Math, and WPC English & Maths lecturers.

2. CRT Workshop for trainers (Inset, Teacher Leaders, Inspectors)
3. Workshop for ETU, NCC staff, and WPC English/Math lecturers on the development of appropriate remediation strategies and materials.
4. On-the-job training of ETU in the development of CRTs and remediation strategies/materials for Grade 1 English and Maths.
5. Design and development of prototype tests and remediation materials.
6. Identification and use of lab school for LVR of prototype materials.
7. Start of development of a teachers handbook for test development.

#### THE MANAGEMENT TRAINING PROGRAMME.

The consultant made preparations for coming to the field and collected materials, attended a briefing conference at IIR in Washington D.C. and travelled to Swaziland by Aug. 12th. 1990. The first two weeks were spent in orientations by USAID and the MOE in Mbabane and attempting to prepare lodgings, transportation, furnishings, licences, permits and application for telephone, electricity, water etc. During this period the team met and discussed plans and strategies for work inception.

Planning was initiated by the COP for the building of the Annual Work Plan, and Five Year Plan. Discussions were held at a number of levels with MOE, USAID. In Service staff and the team relative to coordination of the management training activities with other on-going activities for these units. Discussions were held about the need to set up a counterpart person with the MOE for work with the Management Training. These led to the decisions by the MOE to tie the work of this component with the In-Service Unit and to appoint the Acting Director of this unit and the services of at least two of the In-Service staff to the work of the consultant as counterparts.

The letters of appointment were made. Work was started with this group. An office was set up for the consultant in the William Pitcher Teachers College.

Work on the Annual Plan continued and meetings to support this development occurred. The Consultant visited three teacher training colleges and Mananga Training Institute, held meetings with the MOE staff and others in information gathering relating to the development of this component. Two information sharing sessions were held with the In-Service staff. Materials were prepared for the Data Training Workshop to be held in late October in Manzini.

These materials were shared with counterparts and the Consultant typed, duplicated and packaged the materials.

Plans for the Inaugural Conference were made and materials were developed for this work. The Consultant attended the conference and assisted in the recording and coordination of the group sessions. A summary of conference findings was written and presented to the COP.

A three day training conference on Data Collection for school sites was held for 18 persons, Inspectors and In-Service staff. The conference established the schedule and the personnel for the 50 school site visit to occur in November.

Materials were produced to introduce Methods of Module development for trainers in the future. Shelf materials were organized and a list of materials for ordering was made and submitted. A list of books and articles was drawn up for submission and for purchasing.

The annual plan was completed and a budget for training needs attached. Coordination with Continuous Assessment staff and the Counselling staff was accomplished in order to plan for training in these areas for Headmasters.

#### CAREER GUIDANCE PROGRAMME.

Preliminary discussions were held with the Acting Director of the Educational Testing, Guidance and Psychological Service in September. Dr Lily Chu carried out a two week consultancy in October during which she had a number of discussions with the staff of ETGPS, the staff of the three Teachers Colleges, attended the annual Career Guidance Conference sponsored by the Rotary Club and acted as secretary to one of the Working Committees at the Inaugural Conference.

She prepared a work plan for guidance consultancy for the remainder of year 1 of the project and made suggestions for career guidance activities as follows:-

- i) More emphasis should be placed on the development of initiatives, work habits, motivation and decision making skills.
- ii) The aptitude tests presently being used should be reviewed and revised.
- iii) Teachers, parents and administrators should be sensitised to what guidance and counselling is all about.
- iv) Teacher college lecturers should be trained in guidance and counselling techniques in order to provide effective training to teacher trainees.
- v) Career counsellors should be guided and encouraged to coordinate with home economics, agriculture and pre-vocational teachers and to liase with business in their areas. A job maual should also be produced by ETGPS.

## CONCLUSION:

The period under review has been one of intense activity for the technical assistance team in preparation for the development of the project. The team has received excellent cooperation from the hard-pressed officers of the Ministry who are keen to see the project get under way. However, two major problems are standing in the way of development.

The most pressing problem is the establishment of the planned Testing Unit which will be responsible for the production of the criterion referenced test items and remediation materials, for the training of headmasters, teachers and regional staff in the utilisation of the tests and the remediation materials and in the recording and transmittal of scores.

The task facing members of the unit is immense and the unit will require a dedicated staff if continuous assessment is to be implemented successfully.

The proposal that members of the National Curriculum Centre, the Examinations Council and the Educational Testing, Guidance and Psychology Service spend part of their time working in the testing unit has yet to be implemented. However, the officers concerned have existing duties and unless priorities are clearly defined and clear job descriptions issued application to continuous assessment duties is likely to be less than is necessary.

It should also be pointed out that the contract requires the advisor to work with the team of seven. It is assumed that this means seven fulltime staff. This is considered to be an absolute minimum and the advisor feels that a team of twelve professionals is required together with support staff.

Urgent consideration also needs to be given to appointing a person to head the Testing Unit as a strong head will be needed to direct the activities of the unit especially if it consists of part-time staff.

A similar problem exists in regard to the Management Training component of the project. It is intended to produce a curriculum and materials specifically related to the needs of headmasters of Swazi schools. This means that, besides training, curriculum development is involved. The use of members of the In-Service Unit on a part-time basis is proposed. Whilst the In-Service Unit will be deeply involved in the training, it is felt that more qualified personnel with experience of curriculum development and school management to be employed full time to direct the input of ISU.

The advisor feels that there should be one full time officer in charge of each of the four areas of the Management Training i.e. Personnel Management, School Organisation, Financial management and Instructional Leadership.

The TA team has other concerns related to understaffing and under-qualification in units with which they have to work e.g. The Educational Testing, Guidance and Psychology Service and Research and Planning, to office space for the Management Training and Continuous Assessment operations and to lack of equipment. The team feels, however, that if the major problem of staffing for the Management Training and Continuous Assessment operations are solved by the Ministry of Education providing full time staff matched to the needs of the programmes, the other concerns can be easily dealt with.

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