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Dot-EDU/Haiti

Distance Education Inside and Beyond the Classroom

Quarterly Report 1

October 1 to December 31, 2002

**Associates Cooperative Agreement No. GDG-A-00-01-00011-00
Education Development Center**

ACRONYMS

ABEL2	Advance Basic Education and Literacy
AED	Academy for Educational Development
CAII	Creative Associates International Inc.
CEEC	Commission Episcopale pour l'Education Catholique
CONFEPH	Confederation des Ecoles Privees Independantes d'Haiti
COP	Chief of Party
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
DGI	Direction Generales des Impots
EDC	Education Development Center
FAA	Financial and Administrative Assistant
FAD	Formation a Distance
FEPH	Federation des Ecoles Protestantes d'Haiti
FONHEP	Fondation Haitienne de l'Enseignement Prive
IRI	Interactive Radio Instruction
JDG	Justice, Democracy and Governance
MENJS	Ministere de l'Education Nationale de la Jeunesse et des Sports
NDI	National Democratic Institute
RAMAK	Rasanbleman Medya Aksyon Kominote
UMASS	University of Massachusetts
USAID	United States Agency For International Development

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1. INTRODUCTION

In July 2002, USAID under the Dot-COM alliance signed a two year cooperative agreement with Education Development Center to provide technical assistance and services to achieve the following objectives:

- provide USAID with a set of studies related to developing a community-based radio approach through satellite, a literature review of past USAID experiences in the area of development communications and the use of radio communication across all sectors, a study of the possibilities for extending the use of Distance Education for an out-of-school audience, and the technical assistance needed to support the studies,
- provide support to FONHEP who is responsible for implementing the reading and math lessons in grades 2, 3 and 4 and developing a distance education program for out-of-school,
- continue to provide for pre-testing and post-testing of students during the two-year period through a contract with the University of Massachusetts,
- work with FONHEP to develop a Training Plan for capacity building within FONHEP and designated partners,
- join USAID, FONHEP and Creative Associates in a Steering Committee to guide the work during the two year period.

AED partner in the award, will provide support to the Mission for developing its strategic objective framework in education, along with a computerized monitoring system to track progress.

By mid-September 2002, Dot-EDU/Haiti office space had been located, staff had already been identified and hired: Nicole Racine as Chief of Party, Micheline Hjardemaal as Assistant and Thelius Blanchard as driver. On October 1st the contract for the new office was signed. Dot-EDU was ready to move to 47 Rue Darguin Place Boyer in Petion-Ville.

2. DOT-EDU/Haiti OBJECTIVES FOR THIS QUARTER:

- Start-up
- Identify a lawyer in order to finalize local hire contracts with EDC and start with Dot-EDU/Haiti registration with the Haitian government
- Obtain EDC's fiscal identification card
- Open bank accounts in order to be operational
- Conduct Pretest activities before broadcast of IRI lessons in November
- Assist FONHEP with planification of IRI calendar
- Organize field visits for Satellite Analysis consultant
- Participate in Steering Committee meetings chaired by USAID/Haiti
- Work with USAID/Haiti to plan Steering Committee 3 day Workshop

3. ACTIVITIES UNDER DOT-EDU THIS QUARTER

3.1 SETTING-UP OPERATIONS – START UP

3.1.a. Office Space and contract

It took most of the summer to find adequate office space, landlords not wanting to lease just part of a house. At the end of August, space was located at 47 Rue Darguin Place Boyer in Petion-Ville: two offices, a conference room large enough to accommodate an office for consultants, and a restroom. While in Haiti in early September, Mr. Steve Anzalone/Director Center for Multi Channel Learning at EDC-Task Manager and Mrs. Kit Yasin/EDC-Task Senior Technical Advisor, visited the premises and gave their approval to go ahead with the lease. Lease was finalized with EDC and signed on October 1, 2002.

3.1.b. Local hires

Upon AED and ED 2004 suggestion, EDC decided to give first opportunity for hire to the existing ED 2004 staff. On September 5, 2002, Steve Anzalone, Kit Yasin and Nicole Racine interviewed the Financial Analyst Consultant, the Account, the Program Assistant and the Financial Assistant. Of the four, Micheline Hjordemaal was chosen for the post of Financial and Administrative Assistant.

Mr. Thelius Blanchard was chosen among the four drivers. Both officially started as employees of Dot-EDU/Haiti on October 1, 2002, pending finalization of contracts.

3.1.c. Official move to the Dot-EDU/Haiti office

Although office space was available, Dot-EDU had to wait for USAID authorization to ED 2004 to transfer equipment and material. Authorization came through on October 11, 2002, we started to move on the same day.

Vehicle insurance: Two 1998 Cherokee jeeps have been transferred to Dot-EDU from ED 2004. No company in Haiti gives coverage if cars are not new. PROFASA accepted to give us a one year renewable policy against collision, fire, theft and broken windows. Coverage period October 11, 2002 to October 10, 2003

Gasoline account: The Project thought it best to open an account to be paid at the end of every month instead of having to take large sums out of the "petty cash" every time the cars needed to be filled. Omni Station Shell was the only gas station in the Petion-Ville area to consider our request. In order for account to be opened, we had to leave a deposit to be refunded when account is closed.

Vehicle maintenance: Under ED 2004, Cherokee jeeps were repaired either by Antillean Motors or Haiti Motors. Both are very far from the office, they are very expensive and take an unusually long time for repairs. Dot-EDU will use Antillean and Haiti Motors when work needed requires an expertise that no other garage can offer. For regular tune-ups and repairs, the

Project chooses to use "Garage des Amis" which is 5 minutes away from the office, offers pick-up and delivery service and charges one third the price the above garages do.

Internet connection: The Project spent the first two weeks of October 2002 investigating around trying to find the best service provider. The most impressive company identified was NetAccess Haiti probably because they offer wireless connection and what surprises most is that their prices are very competitive if not the best on the market. A one year contract was signed with NetAccess Haiti on October 29, 2002.

Network cabling: The Project inherited five computers from ED 2004. ED 2004 "technician" offered his services to help us with the networking. The work was completed satisfactorily by mid-October 2002. The same technician started with the computer maintenance but work could not be completed to the Project's satisfaction. The Project is now in the process of identify an individual or a company who can help with the maintenance.

Phone system and fax: Project has two phone lines, a haitel phone from ED 2004 and a Teleco line, which also serves as fax line, provided by the lessor as per stated in the lease. Both phone lines were installed by SAFETEL via the electronic modular switching system also inherited from ED 2004.

Inverter: SAFETEL also installed the inverter. New batteries had to be purchased by the Project.

Air-Conditioners: Valerio Canez the company who sold units to ED 2004 and did the maintenance for them, were contacted to install air-conditioners for Dot-EDU. First the condensers did not match the evaporators and USAID had to be contacted to trace which institution other units had been given to, this took weeks. Then Canez' technician had to go to USAID's warehouse to try and match the units. By December 31, 2002 units were mounted on the walls but not yet connected due to other technical "problems". According to Valerio Canez, work should be completed in January 2003.

Health Insurance: Finding a company to insure a group of three is virtually impossible. Companies do not consider groups less than 15. Dot-EDU contacted all the local insurance companies and identified only two who can offer coverage, Multimed and Medicarte. The Project is negotiating with the companies to determine which plan is more advantageous. Coverage will be effective next quarter.

3.2 MANAGEMENT INSTRUMENTS

3.2.a. Training by EDC

From October 8 to 11, 2002, EDC Washington's Financial and Administrative Assistant, Marisol Montero, traveled to Haiti to train both the Chief of Party and her Assistant on Field Account Reports which must sent to EDC every month. Training also included issues regarding the setting up, criterias for opening a bank account and wiring of funds.

In October and November 2002, Monthly Field Accounts were sent to EDC/Washington via email on the last day of every month and supporting documents sent by pouch a week later. In December the policy changed. Now financial reporting is due the 20th of the month. Dot-EDU December report was sent via email the 20th and the supporting documents sent on December 24th.

3.2.b. Law Firm (PVO Registration and Local Hire Contracts)

The Law firm Hudicourt-Wooley recommended by both USAID and ED 2004, was contacted to assist Dot-EDU/Haiti and EDC with the PVO registration and the finalization of the local hire contracts. On November 19, 2002, the Chief of Party met with Maitre Kettle Wooley of the Law firm Hudicourt-Wooley.

PVO registration - Two applications were remitted to the Chief of Party to be filled out: "Formulaire d'Enregistrement et d'Engagement des Organisations Non Gouvernementales (ONG) d'Aide au Developpement" and "Liste d'Elements Indicateurs Indispensables dans l'Elaboration des Programmes et Projets"

The two applications have been sent to EDC/Newton. As soon as they are returned to the project, they will be filed with the Ministry of Planification. The lawyer informed Dot-EDU that the registration process is somewhat lengthy and may take up to a year to be finalized.

Local hire contracts – Between November 26 and December 27, 2002, Maitre Wooley and EDC/Newton were able to work together and finalize the Project's Assistant and Driver's contracts. On December 31, finalized copies were remitted to Micheline Hjardemaal/FAA and Thelius Blanchard/Driver, for review. Contracts will be signed the first week of January 2003.

3.2.c. Fiscal ID card and Bank Accounts

For Dot-EDU/Haiti to open its bank accounts, a fiscal ID card had to be obtained from the "Direction Generale des Impots/(DGI)". With letter of introduction from USAID/Haiti, procedure was started right away.

However, field activities and office set-up activities had already started, Dot-EDU/Haiti to be operational had to have bank accounts in which to transfer money and be able to write checks. EDC authorized the Chief of Party to open accounts under her name, to be closed as soon as the fiscal ID card would be delivered.

In spite of close follow-up with DGI, by December 31st the card still was not ready. DGI assured the project it would be delivered us the first week of January 2003.

3.2.d. Visit from USAID

On December 9, 2002, upon the Chief of Party's request, USAID's Financial Analyst and Auditor, Mrs. Stephane Bright, guided the Project through an audit exercise to be sure Dot-

EDU/Haiti files were in order and met with USAID administrative norms. The project rated fairly well, and is awaiting a report with recommendations.

3.3 PROGRAMMATIC ACTIVITIES

3.3.a. Testing

FONHEP, USAID principal Haitian implementing partner in education, is responsible for broadcasting math and reading lessons to 2nd, 3rd and 4th graders.

EDC who has since 1996 with the ABEL2 project and through the 2001-2002 school year with the ED 2004 project, always provided the technical assistance with pre and post tests of students, will continue to do so during the next two years. As usual EDC will contract with University of Massachusetts to continue to assist the Dot-EDU project with test development and the processing and analysis of student results.

School selection sample

The sample selection process has always been an issue in the past. EDC made plans with Professor James Royer of UMASS to travel to Haiti to discuss the in-school program evaluation activities and assist Dot-EDU in the selection of schools to participate in the evaluation effort.

This year, the task was to

- 1) identify control schools to match as nearly as possible the characteristics of the treatment schools,
- 2) identify schools to be sure to balance out student gender,
- 3) try as much as possible to select control schools that will continue to participate as control schools for the duration of the project, one difficulty in the previous evaluation effort was that control schools changed every year, thereby making it impossible to track cumulative treatment impact.

Professor Royer, traveled to Haiti on October 14 and 15, 2002 to work with Dot-EDU, FONHEP and the Consultant who was to administer the pretest. Twelve schools were chosen to be part of the sample: six for the experimental group and six for the control group, being careful to take all variables into consideration: the department (Ouest and Nord), the location (urban or rural), gender etc.

Pretests in October 2002 – bubble sheets

The pretest took place between October 25 and November 19, 2002. Although some days had to be rescheduled, the testing went well. Tests were administered to a total of 947 boys and girls in the 2nd, 3rd and 4th grades.

The bubble sheets, used to code tests administered were coded from November 20 to December 3, 2002 and shipped to UMASS for analysis. Report will be send to Dot-EDU next quarter.

3.3.b. Steering Committee

In accordance with the Award, the role of the committee is to help clarify objectives or issues and specify implementation actions. The committee is comprised of USAID/Haiti staff, EDC, Dot-EDU/Haiti, FONHEP, RAMAK a Creative Associates Project working with Media Assistance and Civic Education Program, other relevant members of Creative and JDG.

An initial one-week team planning session was to have been held as soon as the award was approved. Instead on September 5, 2002, USAID organized a meeting to: 1) formally introduce all Steering Committee members, 2) allow EDC to outline for the committee members' reference the tasks mentioned in the Dot-EDU scope of work, 3) elaborate the SOW of the committee. Participants at the meeting were:

USAID/Haiti: Carl Abdou Rahmaan, Chief Office of Population, Health, Nutrition and Education – Normil Henry, Education Technical Advisor - Carole Calixte, Program Assistant - Mohamed Zahar, Senior Political Program Manager/JDG

EDC/Washington: Steve Anzalone, Director Center for Multichannel Learning and Task Manager, Kit Yasin, Senior Technical Advisor

Dot-EDU/Haiti : Nicole Racine, Chief of Party

FONHEP: Lunise Cerin, Directrice Executive – Evelyne Verdier, Directeur Adjoint aux Operations

ED 2004: Marilyn Louis, Activity Director – Jean-Mark Zamor, Directeur des Operations

Steve Anzalone presented the tasks of the scope of work and some of the dates for implementation. Lunise Cerin presented FONHEP's program and pointed out the reasons for choosing to work in the West and the North regions only: 1) their budget forced them to focus on concentration, instead of working in several regions where they would have no impact 2) FONHEP's partners, CEEC, FEPH and CONFEPH are strongest in the West and the North.

Although FONHEP is already thinking about the out-of-school program, they are awaiting to work further with the Steering Committee to decide on the exact target group of young adults.

No decision was made about the SOW of Steering Committee. Members agreed to meet on October 22, 2002 for Dot-EDU/Haiti, RAMAK and FONHEP to present their project to Mrs. Pamela Callen, Assistant Director, USAID/Haiti.

On December 6, 2002, at the third Steering Committee meeting it was decided the official workshop which was to have been in September 2002 was overdue. The Committee chose to hold a Program Planning Workshop instead and invite other institutions who either have activities with community radio or are planning to in the near future.

The workshop to be held on Jan 15, 16 and 17, 2003 at the Hotel Montana has for objectives to:

- Officially introduce the Dot-EDU/Haiti project
- Define the directives of the distance education program for the out-of-school audience
- Identify the successes and the challenges to be solved for a better orientation of the Satellite-cum-radio network.

Participants to the workshop are to be: USAID/Haiti and Washington, JDG, EDC/Washington, Dot-EDU/Haiti, FONHEP, RAMAK, CRS, Save the Children, Care, World Vision and NDI.

The Centre d'Encadrement Technique (CFET) was suggested to facilitate the workshop.

3.3.c. Literature Review

Dot-EDU first activity under this award was a compilation of documents and materials of USAID past experiences in working with radio across all sectors and ensure that applicable lessons learned from these past experiences inform future planning and implementation relevant to USAID/Haiti SO4.

The first draft of the comprehensive review was submitted to USAID/Haiti for feedback the first week of December. On December 24, the Chief of Party sent USAID a reminder that the Project was still awaiting their feedback. USAID responded feedback would be compiled by USAID/Haiti and forwarded to EDC early in January 2003. Following feedback, a revised version of the review will be submitted to USAID/Haiti one month later.

3.3.d. Satellite Analysis

Under this award Dot-EDU must initiate an in-depth analysis of the viability of introducing satellite technology as a tool for enhancing communications among community radio stations, extending coverage throughout Haiti, thus providing a network for development-related programs in education and other sectors. Dot-EDU must also assess the viability of using FONHEP as "home base" for the network, assess the viability of including other institutions active in media transmission and examine issues pertaining to management, procurement, renovations and training.

Under ED 2004, the consultant Dominique Guay has conducted two previous assessment studies for the possible development of a low-cost satellite based education channel via community radio stations. His evaluations suggest that emphasis should be put on solar power and generating equipment and also on transmitting equipment, including antennas and towers.

Under Dot-EDU, Dominique was in Haiti from November 16 to 23, 2002. His visit had for objective:

- to review the work undertaken under ED 2004 with USAID/Haiti, Dot-EDU/Haiti and FONHEP,
- to establish a connection between RAMAK's activity and Dot-EDU's in terms of technical tasks to be addressed jointly or separately by each project and brief USAID on area of interface,
- update Dot-EDU and FONHEP's knowledge of the progress and technical issues related to RAMAK's work on strengthening of community radio stations in Haiti.

In planification of Dominique Guay's arrival, the Chief of Party met with Terry Thielen of RAMAK. We feared that if both organizations approached the community radio stations as two separate USAID contractors, it wouldl create damaging confusion on the part of the radio stations vis-à-vis USAID programs in general. Establishing a clean trusting relationship with the radio stations being crucial, RAMAK agreed to let Ives-Marie Chanel, their Community Radio Support Manager second Dot-EDU by accompanying Dominique Guay in the field on November 19 and 20.

USAID agreed to the joint venture especially since both projects needed to look at their goals and objectives and find a consensus on what improvement should be bought to community radio stations to best serve the needs of both projects. Also because the work being done by RAMAK in the technical areas of community radio directly supports the requirements of the satellite-cum-radio infrastructure.

Dominique's first visit to community radio stations in the North region, Port-Margot, Pilboro, Milot and Grand-Pre (Pilate and Plaisance were closed due to failure of inverter), confirmed his previous findings in his visits to commercial radio stations in 2000 and 2002: there is great interest but technically speaking, their operating conditions are far from ideal. Although their studio equipment is fairly adequate, they experience severe electrical power problems and are equipped with low grade transmitters and home made antennas.

Dominique has already submitted his work plan and schedule for the satellite-cum-radio infrastructure study. He will be in Haiti toward the end of February or early March 2003 for a two to three week period to:

1. look at potential CR sites, determine which ones are the most suitable,
2. investigate the commercial broadcasting sector of Port-au-Prince already using satellite receiving sites and interested in sharing up-link site, therefore reducing installation and operation cost,
3. evaluate FONHEP as a home base for the network.

Dominique's debriefing to USAID, Dot-EDU, FONHEP, RAMAK and JDG on Friday November 22, 2002 could not take place due to socio-political disturbances which paralyzed the country on that day. Dominique's report was forwarded to all concerned.

3.3.e. SO4 Framework

Under this award Dot-EDU is to work with USAID and partners to reassess and modify the Strategic Objective 4 framework. AED, EDC's partner in this award will provide the technical assistance for arriving at a definitive framework. The task was to begin this quarter, however USAID/Haiti suggested we wait pending their decision on the SO4.

3.3.f. Monitoring and Evaluation

Dot-EDU, in collaboration with USAID/Haiti must establish at FONHEP an evaluation and monitoring system to track progress on indicators within the SO4 as well as indicators that apply to other program elements. AED, is awaiting USAID's decision on the SO4 to provide FONHEP with the technical assistance to establish the system. No work has been initiated this semester, pending USAID's decision on SO4.

3.3.g. FONHEP

In-school math and Creole program

FONHEP orientation and launching seminar for the sectors CEEC, FEPH, CONFEPH whose schools are going to receive the IRI lessons in Creole reading and math during the next two years was held on September 26 and 27, 2002.

The Chief of Party met with the sectors executive and administrative staff, an impressive group of people eager to start with the program and ready to face the challenge since it is their first experience with distance education. Each sector has 50 schools. Twenty-five urban and rural in the West region and 25 urban and rural in the North. The schools are in clusters of 8 or 9 schools.

On September 25, the Chief of Party worked with FONHEP on packing and distribution of support material and on finalizing the calendar of broadcast based on the Ministry of Education 2002-2003 school calendar. Broadcast of the reading and math lessons to 2nd, 3rd and 4th grade students started on November 25, 2002.

Out-of school program

Target group remains to be determined. Will be discussed at the Program Planning Workshop on January 15, 16 and 17, 2003.

4 MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS FOR THIS QUARTER

Although there have been delays implementing some activities, major goals for this quarter have been met. It helped to have been able to locate office space and hire the local staff before project start-up.

- It was a major achievement to be able to set-up office in just two months. Having to deal with contractors for the internet connection, phone system and fax, computer network, inverter installation, air-conditioners, was most challenging to say the least. All is in place except for the air-conditioners which have been installed but so far have not been connected.
- The project was also able to open its bank accounts although funds advanced by EDC/Newton were deposited into a bank account open under the Chief of Party's name due to the fact that EDC did not yet have its fiscal identification card.
- Having been able to arrange for the satellite analysis consultant to visit community radio stations with RAMAK
- Having worked with USAID/Haiti and finally been able to decide on the dates of the launching of the Dot-EDU project (Program Planning Workshop on January 15, 16 and 17, 2002)
- For the Chief of Party to be able to keep to a timely schedule of activities with the help of only an assistant.

5. CONCERNS AND PROBLEMS

It is quite an achievement to be able to make it work and to keep up with activities in spite of socio-political disturbances which erupt fairly often. It is also a major concern. "Down days" are a major handicap to activities. In November, several days of the pretest had to be rescheduled, schools were closed, Dominique Guay's debriefing at USAID at to be cancelled because tires were burning and no one could take to the streets. At least two to three times a month, sometimes mores, visits to FONHEP or other collaborating institutions have to be reported.

USAID is most aware of the situation and warns every one to use caution especially when it comes to field work.

We must hope the situation will improve in the months to come.

6. OBJECTIVES FOR JANUARY – MARCH 2003

- Plan and hold Program Planning Workshop in January
- Plan Satellite Analysis Consultant's visit in February or March
- Work with EDC and FONHEP on FONHEP's Training Plan
- Work with EDC on Work plan to be approved by USAID
- Follow-up on revised version of Literature Review
- Open EDC's bank accounts as soon as Fiscal ID card is received
- Evaluate the project's Assistant
- Work on the project's filing system

- Identify a company for computer maintenance
- Evaluate whether the project is going to have a radio communication system installed in project's vehicles as opposed to purchasing cell phones

7. CONCLUSION

In the first three months of his mandate, Dot-EDU/Haiti has already made quite an impact among institutions working in the education sector. The out-of-school program seems to have aroused much interest. Many are looking forward to the Satellite-cum-Radio network, hoping to be able to "tap-in" as they say and help their programs benefit from low-cost quality broadcast of educational programs and information.

Most who have been in contact with the Project have suggested we chose another name for it if possible. "Dot-EDU c'est quoi exactement" we keep hearing. We have to looking for another name other than Dot-EDU/Haiti. A name more representative of the distance education activity we are leading, a name adapted to Haiti and Haitians.