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NEW HORIZONS FOR PRIMARY SCHOOLS

SEMI-ANNUAL REPORT

July-December 1999

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USAID/Kingston  
2 Haining Road  
Kingston 5, Jamaica

Ministry of Education and Culture  
2 National Heroes Circle  
Kingston 4, Jamaica

Submitted by:

Juarez and Associates, Inc.

Home Office  
12139 National Boulevard  
Los Angeles, CA 90064  
(310) 478-0826 ext. 211  
(310) 479-1863 (fax)  
[juarezassociates.com](http://juarezassociates.com)

Project Implementation Unit  
Caenwood Complex  
37 Arnold Road, Kingston 5  
(876) 967-5192  
(876) 967-5192 (fax)  
[concil@cwjamaica.com](mailto:concil@cwjamaica.com)

In Collaboration with  
IDEAS, Ltd  
[IdeasLtd@guate.net](mailto:IdeasLtd@guate.net)

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JULY – DECEMBER 1999

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## NHP SEMI-ANNUAL REPORT: July – December 1999

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This document describes the activities and accomplishments of the New Horizons for Primary Schools (NHP) Activity during July – December 1999. NHP has the objective to enhance the performance of Jamaican primary school students in numeracy and literacy. The focus is on those children who, because of poverty and other disabling conditions, have had little academic success in school. Increased academic success is to be accomplished through the development of model interventions in 72 schools that, when tested, can be used to improve the performance of low-achieving children throughout Jamaica.

The major activities conducted during the six-month report period included a set that extended across all ten project interventions. These are summarized in reference to the Intermediate Results (IRs) of the USAID/Jamaica Mission Results Framework under each of the NHP interventions:

- **Intervention #1:** Development of Innovative Math and Reading Programs. (IR4.1 *Improved Quality of Teaching*)

**Accomplishments:** Principals were oriented and sensitized further to the core principles and strategies of NHP, guided in the formation of School Development Teams, and instructed on the topic of school development planning. This was done by the Project Implementation Unit (PIU) in collaboration with the MOEC through regional launches and a Principals' Workshop as well as cluster and school-based training activities during the period. Support in the preparation of individual school plans and math and reading programs was also provided teachers and principals during a series of school visitations.

- **Intervention #2:** Teacher In-service Training. (IR4.1 *Improved Quality of Teaching*)

**Accomplishments:** Considerable collaboration with the MOEC took place in implementing the revised primary curriculum in the project schools in order to establish a theoretical and practical basis on which to develop the individual literacy and numeracy programs. This preparation ensures a solid base for the innovative individual school programs and dovetails with the diagnosis data gathered on teacher and student needs. Around this a teacher training program has been designed with a view on customization and greater efficiency and effectiveness, where much of the training will be site-based.

- **Intervention #3: Governance and Leadership Training.** (IR 4.3 *Improved Management of Project Schools*)

**Accomplishments:** The international consultant hired through Juarez and Associates conducted training workshops for School Board members on behalf of the National Council on Education. As a consequence, a manual was produced to be used by future trainers of stakeholders involved with the project activities under the guidance of the NCE.

- **Intervention #4: Parent Training.** (IR 4.2 *Improved School Attendance*)

**Accomplishments:** The NHP health and nutrition specialist provided assistance to the NCE on the development of a draft health manual to be used by school trainers. The manual was the result of a series of focus groups held with parents and other stakeholders to determine the needs of the population being served by the NHP in the area of health and nutrition.

- **Intervention #5: Health and Nutrition.** (IR 4.2 *Improved School Attendance*)

**Accomplishment:** The project contract was amended as appropriate to reflect the present needs of the NHP schools. The nutritionist visited schools consistently and engaged stakeholders in the development of the breakfast program. Schools to receive assistance were selected, menu plans were developed and activities were initiated to establish alternative funding sources for the breakfast program and to meet the objective of self-sufficiency promoted through the NHP program philosophy. Nutrition committees as well as individual breakfast programs have been planned for the eight project schools under this intervention.

- **Intervention #6: Supplementary Materials.** (IR 4.1 *Improved Quality of Teaching*)

**Accomplishments:** Enriching supplementary materials have been identified for all project schools based on research and appraisals by the PIU technical team with inputs from and an array of other educators and publishers. A list of exemplary supplementary materials was recommended and approved by both the Ministry of Education and Culture and USAID. A Request for Quotation process was successfully completed and qualified vendors identified for procurement of these materials.

- **Intervention #7: Educational Technology.** (IR 4.1 *Improved Quality of Teaching*)

**Accomplishments:** A preliminary feasibility study was developed on the viability of implementing the educational technology activity in project schools. An Educational Technology Specialist was hired by Juarez and Associates to critique as well as expand on the activity to date. Consulting activities included stateside work in December and "in-country" projected for January

with the major focus on establishing a well-founded plan for the effective use of computers and other technology effectively under the project for the improvement of mathematics and literacy instruction and learning.

- **Intervention #8: Training of Resource Teachers.** (IR 4.1 *Improved Quality of Teaching*)

**Accomplishment:** PIU specialists have provided technical assistance to the Professional Development Unit of the Ministry of Education and Culture in establishing criteria for the selection of potential resource teachers to be trained. A significant amount of other collaborative consultation and training activities leading to the eventual screening and selection of the Mathematics and Literacy Resource Teachers was conducted jointly with Core Curriculum Unit Education Officers and the PDU Training Coordinator assigned to NHP.

- **Intervention #9: Linking MOEC Data Bases and Intervention #10: Linking Project School to EMIS Network.** (IR 4.3 *Improved Management of Schools*)

**Accomplishments:** The project EMIS Specialist completed consulting assignments with Ministry and other project stakeholders on issues related to the identification and procurement of the administrative computers necessary for improving the management of project schools. Major activities included the successful purchase, delivery to Jamaica, inspection and testing of all 90 computers and accessories to be installed in the schools and six regional offices. A school readiness study was also completed and presented to the MOEC during the period. Interconnectivity issues were also analyzed. At the time of completing this report, the project is awaiting information on the acceptance of the computers by the respective Ministry officials and a report that the schools are ready for proper installation of the equipment within an appropriate, secure setting.

The major problems experienced during the report period included lack of school readiness to receive the administrative computers, limited experience of both school principals and School Development Teams in developing localized enrichment programs in mathematics and reading due, in part, to the lack of knowledge and experience in school development planning, and, most significantly, a temporary shortfall of funds in the contractor's budget, resulting in a forced reduction of the level of effort within a number of interventions. Action steps were taken to address each of these difficulties while continuing to make noteworthy accomplishments as described herein.

## INTRODUCTION

This document describes the activities and accomplishments of the New Horizons for Primary Schools (NHP) Activity during July to December 1999. NHP has the objective to enhance the performance of Jamaican primary school students in numeracy and literacy. The focus is on those children who, because of poverty and other disabling conditions, have had little academic success in school. Increased academic success is to be accomplished through the development of model interventions in 72 schools that, when tested, can be used to improve the performance of low-achieving children throughout Jamaica. Following a brief description of the New Horizons Project, the overall expected results of the New Horizons activity are presented. The subsequent section makes up the bulk of the report and consists of a narrative description of the principal activities carried out during the reporting period. This is followed by a section on "Performance" that presents the activities, products generated from the activities, and outcomes of specific activities in tabular format. The next section discusses the problems encountered in project implementation and steps taken to resolve such problems. Activities to be completed during the upcoming reporting period are presented in the final section under "Statement of Work". All sections of the report are organized in terms of the Strategic Objective (SO) and the intermediate results (IRs) to which NHP responds. Specific lower level results are discussed in the narratives, as appropriate. The Appendix includes a list of all deliverables and other products submitted to the CTO at USAID from July to December 1999. (These are available upon request.) A financial status report for the period makes up the second section of the Appendix.

The semi-annual report reflects agreement with USAID to replace quarterly reporting in order to reduce routine reporting and feedback that is consistent with USAID guidelines. The format of the report also differs somewhat from previous progress reporting in that reporting of activities are tied as closely as possible to the USAID/Jamaica Mission Results Framework.

### **Background**

New Horizons for Primary Schools is currently at the midpoint of the second year of a five-year effort. The NHP is designed to improve student performance in grades 1-6 through employing a series of interrelated interventions that work in concert to change not only the learning experiences of children in the classroom, but the broader enabling environment of the school and community. NHP is funded by USAID Jamaica and the overall project is a seven-year effort. NHP is being carried out by Juárez and Associates, in collaboration with IDEAS, Ltd.

NHP is working in partnership with the Jamaican Ministry of Education and Culture (MOEC) and other members of the Jamaican education community to bring about changes in schools and classrooms that result in individual students having greater academic success in primary school. The strategic vision of NHP is to use a "bottoms up" approach to equip local communities, school

principals, and teachers to improve local school policies, decision-making, and educational practice in favor of better quality learning for all children.

NHP supports the USAID/Jamaica strategic objective of *Increased literacy and numeracy among targeted Jamaican youth*. The NHP objective of building capacity to both manage educational reform at the local level and to improve instructional practice and student learning in the classroom directly support several Intermediate Results. These are: IR 4.1 *Improved Quality of Teaching*; IR 4.2 *Increased School Attendance*; and IR 4.3 *Improved Management of Schools*. The SO is supported through the implementation of ten interrelated interventions: Developing innovative mathematics and literacy programs; providing in-service teacher training in reading and mathematics; providing governance and leadership training for schools, communities and parents; offering parent education and training; selective facilitating of health and nutrition activities; providing supplementary reading and mathematics materials; training teachers in educational technology and establishing computer laboratories; training resource teachers; integrating databases; and linking schools with the Jamaican regional and national EMIS system.

### **Expected Results**

New Horizons furthers the Strategic Objective by achieving 11 expected results. These results span the ten interventions and can be summarized as follows:

- Marked improvement in reading and numeracy performance among primary school students
- Innovative curricula and materials, which meet the needs of individual schools
- Classroom and resource teachers trained in the latest instructional approaches for reading and mathematics, educational technology (including computer assisted instruction and educational media resources)
- Modernized school management
- Exposure of teachers, students, and communities to educational technology and information systems
- Breakfast and nutritional education programs instituted in a number of project schools
- Empowerment of school boards and parent/teacher organizations
- Greater professionalism of teachers
- Increased attendance and academic promotion
- Jamaican youth prepared for the technologically-oriented marketplace
- Increased community and private sector involvement in support of schools

Prior to the current reporting period, NHP has selected the 72 participant schools and carried out a diagnostic study in these schools, supported the development of training activities for the implementation of the revised primary curriculum, determined schools to

participate in the nutritional component of the project, identified a number of supplementary reading and mathematics materials based on the diagnostic study, developed a concept paper that highlighted lessons learned from experience with educational technology in developing countries, developed a plan for short-term training of education professionals participating in the project, procured administrative computers to assist principals with school based decisions, and collected baseline data for monitoring the results of the project over time. The NHP professional team has also assisted partners of the MOEC Professional Development Unit in developing training plans and the project has supported the National Council on Education in collecting data and developing training plans for both school/community leaders and parents.

## PRINCIPAL ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN DURING THE REPORT PERIOD

**Strategic Objective:** *Increased literacy and numeracy among targeted Jamaican youth.*

**Collaboration with MOEC in Implementation of Revised Primary Curriculum.** The NHP activities are to complement the Revised Primary Curriculum by focusing on those children who, because of poverty or other disabling conditions have had little success in school. Thus, it is important to work closely with the Core Curriculum Unit in implementing the curriculum in NHP schools in order to ensure that the base is in place for the innovative mathematics and literacy programs being developed by the project. To this end, PIU subject-matter specialists provided input in their areas of specialization to several MOEC activities during the period. These included: Literacy Summer Camps, as they pertained to NHP schools; participation in regional launches, training of trainers and teacher training activities, and attendance of meetings and forums related to the MOEC "Literacy Initiative."

**Conduct of NHP Principals' Workshop.** A three-day Principals' Workshop was conducted. This activity sensitized principals to the NHP core principles and informed them about the revised primary school curriculum. It assisted them in clarifying their role as leaders in school reform and provided ideas on approaches to improving literacy and numeracy in their schools. Concurrently with the development of the workshop and immediately following the activity, specialists carried out a cycle of visits to NHP schools. They interacted with principals and teachers regarding the implementation of the curriculum and possible complementary innovations, as well as conducting an in-depth diagnosis of teachers' needs.

**Development of Literacy and Mathematics Innovative Implementation Plan.** Based on diagnosis of teachers needs, the PIU prepared a status report on the literacy and numeracy programs in individual schools. This report, in turn, served as the basis for developing a plan for implementing innovative programs appropriate to the needs of individual schools. The plan



included a strategy that would focus maximum attention in the short run on those schools that had the greatest needs, as identified by teachers and principals and on student performance the previous year.

#### **Intermediate Result 4.1: *Improved Teacher Quality***

Input on the Selection of Resource Teachers. PIU specialists collaborated with the PDU in the development of selection criteria and identification of candidates for resource teachers in mathematics and reading. Review and synchronization of the Life of Project plan and the PDU five-year work plan in terms of recruitment, selection and placement of resource teachers was carried out.

Identification and Procurement of Supplementary Materials. The preparation of a review of supplementary materials in the areas of mathematics and reading was completed and procurement lists were compiled for concurrence by the Ministry and USAID. After approval, procurement process was initiated through the launching of an RFQ both in Jamaica and in the United States. Owing to funding delays, the first procurement will be also delayed. Subsequent procurement of materials will be made as funds become available.

Initiation of International Consultancy in Educational Technology. A scope of work for an international Education Technology specialist was developed with input from the Media Services Unit and others. This scope of work was approved and Dr. Karen Price was contracted to carry out the assignment. The consultant began her work by preparing a working document for use by the NHP Ad Hoc Committee on Educational Technology for selection of appropriate mixes of educational technology that will support the learning of language arts and mathematics. The consultant will visit Jamaica in January of 2000 to complete her consultancy.

#### **Intermediate Result 4.2: *Increased School Attendance***

**Completion of Amendment to the Health and Nutrition Component.** An amendment for the health and nutrition intervention was developed and submitted to USAID and MOEC for concurrence on restructuring of this component. The effort was redesigned to focus on breakfast programs in eight NHP schools. The health and nutrition specialist met with committees and others to determine needs, resources and procedures to be carried out in implementing the breakfast program and she also made visits to the schools in order to support these activities and program planning.

**Parental Training Activities.** In an effort to determine the scope of parenting training in health and nutrition to be included in the trainers manual developed in collaboration with the National Council on Education (NCE), focus groups were successfully

held in sites representing the intervention schools. Each school was done individually with the exception of two of the schools. In total, there were 60 participants, with discussions lasting approximately 1.5 hours. As a result of these focus groups, the outline for the training manual was prepared and submitted. Preliminary results of the focus group report were shared with project stakeholders for future decision-making.

**Breakfast Program.** The nutritionist produced a "Procedures Manual" detailing the responsibilities of the schools' health/nutrition committees and other stakeholders engaged in the intervention. This manual serves as a guide to ensure that the requirements of the project are met. With the assistance of the nutrition specialist, menus have been prepared for all eight schools and calculations done to determine quantities appropriate for meeting dietary requirements. Nutrition committees are now formed in all schools except Cavaliers. Throughout the program, the nutritionist has communicated and reiterated with the schools that they should drive for self-sufficiency. Activities are underway that support this funding approach and schools have already initiated contacts with community representatives. Three of the eight schools deficient in infrastructure sent out sponsorship letters and improvements in two of the schools are underway. The third is awaiting more substantial donations. The nutrition specialist has made a presentation on her component of the project at the Ministry of Education and Culture and visiting consultants for the IDB project.

#### **Intermediate Result 4.3: *Improved Management of Schools***

**Support to Principals in Creation of School Development Plans.** School Principals were introduced to the philosophy of School Development Teams and the need to involve SDT members in situational analysis of schools and their environments and were instructed on the purpose of School Development Plans to deal with the numeracy and literacy concerns of individual NHP schools. This orientation was accomplished during the application process workshops, Regional Launches and Principals' Workshops held in October. In a workshop to orient the principals to the new revised school curriculum, further work was done on the nature of the SDPs. Principals were asked to submit by November 25<sup>th</sup>, updated versions of the School Development Plans and revised lists (if necessary) of the School Development Teams. At the end of the school year, 61% of the 72 schools had submitted a School Development Plan. In mid-October during a workshop to orient principals to the revised curriculum, further work was done in this area. The number of schools that have now submitted a plan is approximately 80%.

**Report on the status of individual school reading and math programs.** It has been the target of NHP that schools develop individualized numeracy and reading programs compatible with the Revised Primary School Curriculum. The mechanics of this process has been conducted through individual School Development Teams (SDTs). The number of completed school plans is steadily reaching completion. School Development Plans have been reviewed for numeracy and literacy program

content. As of November 1999, 51% of NHP schools have submitted their completed literacy programs and 49% have completed their numeracy programs. The development of School Development Plans as well as the numeracy and literacy components of these plans is an evolutionary process dependent on the increasing of skills of School Development Teams aided by the NHP-PIU specialists. To this end principals are continuously being contacted by the NHP technical specialists with the assistance of the Senior Education Officers for Primary Schools to ensure that schools are successfully completing their individual programs. In addition, the primary international consultant in reading and mathematics, Dr. John McNeil, traveled to Jamaica to assist the New Horizons Project specialists and participating schools in a number of activities pertaining to the development of individual school programs in these two subject-matter areas. Plans were made to visit schools individually and in clusters during January through March 2000 to work with those schools which have been perceived to be in greatest need with regards to the development of their individual school programs. While the development of individual programs in mathematics and literacy in all the schools has not yet been completed, the potential at each school is great and the NHP and its partners are intent on achieving this end through collaborative efforts.

**Procurement and Inspection of Administrative Computers.** As part of the implementation process for interventions 9 and 10, the stage was set by the contractor to assure that the most suitable procurement of computer equipment was made available to the stakeholders in the field. Computer equipment (a desktop computer, small laser printer and uninterruptible power supply) was procured for each of the 72 NHP schools and three desktop computers and three small laser printers for each of the six Regional Education Offices of the Ministry of Education and Culture. This activity was conducted with the assistance of the subcontractors, IDEAS, Ltd., and Computer Boutique of Jamaica. The hardware and software was successfully procured and arrived in Jamaica on October 4, 1999.

The Request for Quotations (RFQ) for this equipment included detailed specifications and required a physical and functional inspection and inventory to be conducted in Jamaica as a basis for acceptance of the equipment. Inspection of the equipment was conducted by Bruce Newman, EMIS Specialist for the NHP. Principal activities undertaken during inspection included unloading from the container in which the hardware was received by the vendor. All equipment was unboxed and inspected for physical damage. It was inventoried, functionally tested as indicated on the detailed inventory pages, and had a USAID sticker affixed to it. The equipment was then reboxed in original packing, the box was then resealed and marked with the number corresponding to the inventory listing, and the box reloaded onto the cargo container. A reputable local institution completed the readiness-for-installation and security report, setting the stage for acceptance by the Ministry. Once acceptance has been effectuated, the remaining steps of computer installation in the schools are to be implemented.

**Analysis of Connectivity Issues and Replacement of Network Server.** Several initiatives were taken in preparation of the plan for interconnectivity of the MOEC Central and Regional offices. The EMIS specialist reports that a high-speed dedicated link should be established to interconnect local area networks (LANs) at the National Heroes Circle and Caenwood Complex

Offices of the Ministry of Education in Kingston. Computers at the Regional Education Offices should be integrated into simple local area networks. Schools will also be able to access the central LAN through their built-in modems, providing them with access to Central Ministry Databases. To achieve this end, the EMIS Specialist completed a series of in-country consultancies beginning in early 1999. To date, the following activities were conducted: 1) minimum functionality specifications for school-level software were developed; 2) the data transfer and consolidation strategy design was initiated, and; 3) Planning, the National Assessment Programme and other units within the Ministry were consulted on approaches to data integration, required hardware, software and training. Given the specifics of implementing the interconnection and communications plan in Jamaica, it is planned that a local communications and networking specialist will be hired to specify the optimal solution for final planning and implementation.

As a result of the failure of the Novell server at the National Heroes Circle office, a replacement server was specified and procured. This entry-level server will become fully integrated into the interconnection scheme at a later date.

PERFORMANCE

Table 1: SO 4. Increased Literacy and Numeracy Among Targeted Jamaican Youth

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	PARTICIPANTS	PRODUCTS	OUTCOME/RESULTS
<p><b>1. Developing Innovative Mathematics and Literacy Programs.</b></p> <p>Collaboration with MOEC in implementation of Revised Primary Curriculum</p>	<p>PIU provided specialized input to MOEC activities including literacy summer camps, regional launches, training of trainers, and training of teachers</p>	<p>PIU specialists and Project Director, members of Core Curriculum Unit, PDU Training Coordinator; approximately 60 trainers and 650 teachers. 800 school/communities stakeholders oriented to curriculum and NHP.</p>	<p>Training materials</p> <p>Core of Experienced Trainers Identified</p>	<p>All of NHP teachers made familiar with the revised curriculum. Base formed for NHP complementary work.</p>
<p>Conduct NHP principals workshop and in-depth teachers' needs analysis</p>	<p>Three-day workshop on NHP principles, leadership, and approaches to mathematics and literacy instruction, complemented by follow-up school visits and in-depth diagnosis of teachers' needs</p>	<p>PIU specialists, 72 NHP principals, approximately 700 NHP teachers.</p>	<p>Workshop training program based on needs*1, training events report *2, Principal's Resource Notebook*3</p>	<p>Principals and PIU agree on responsibilities and roles in terms of innovative programs. Teacher needs determined.</p>
<p>Develop mathematics and literacy innovations implementation plan</p>	<p>Plan for implementing innovative programs appropriate to the needs of individual schools</p>	<p>PIU specialists</p>	<p>Set of individual project school development plans and status report *4</p>	<p>Strategic plan to guide implementation of innovative programs in place.</p>

Table 2: IR 4.1 Improved Teacher Quality

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	PARTICIPANTS	PRODUCTS	OUTCOME/RESULTS
<p><b>2 In-service Teacher Training in Reading and Mathematics</b></p> <p><b>6 Supplementary Reading and Mathematics Materials</b></p> <p>Identification and procurement of supplementary materials</p>	<p>See Table 1 above</p> <p>Materials reviewed and lists submitted to MOEC and USAID with approvals and procurement process started.</p>	<p>PIU, USAID, MOEC, J&amp;A home office</p>	<p>Supplementary Materials Review document *5 Distribution Plan *6</p>	<p>Eventual provision of additional learning opportunities to NHP students</p>
<p><b>7 Educational Tech.</b></p> <p>International consultancy in Education Technology initiated.</p>	<p>SOW developed with Media Services Unit and Dr. Karen Price developed working document prior to January visit to Jamaica</p>	<p>Project Director, Media Service Unit, Dr. Price</p>	<p>Preliminary report on the Ed Tech Intervention *7</p>	<p>Guidelines for decisions on appropriate technology mixes for NHP schools</p>
<p><b>8 Training Literacy and Mathematics Resource Teacher</b></p> <p>Input on the Selection of Resource Teachers</p>	<p>(A description of PDUcore activities, products and results is available.)</p> <p>Assistance to the PDU in development of selection criteria and identification of candidates</p>	<p>PIU, CCU and PDU</p>	<p>No contractor product</p>	<p>Support for teacher implementation of innovations</p>

Table 3: IR 4.2 Increased School Attendance

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	PARTICIPANTS	PRODUCTS	OUTCOME/RESULTS
<p><b>Health and Nutrition</b></p> <p>Amendment for Health and Nutrition Component</p>	<p>USAID and MOEC concurrence on restructuring of component to focus on breakfast program in eight NHP schools. Supportive activities involving parents and communities, teacher training in health and nutrition. Visits to schools</p>	<p>Eight participating schools, Health and Nutrition Specialist</p>	<p>Project Amendment *8 Needs and resources report *9</p>	<p>Focused activity in appropriate schools</p>
<p>Development of implementation materials</p>	<p>Procedure guidelines for implementation of breakfast program developed, manual outlined and SOW written for H&amp;N and community development specialists</p>	<p>Health and Nutrition Specialist</p>	<p>Procedure Guidelines *10 Draft Manual *11 Focus Group Report*12</p>	<p>Facilitation of implementation of breakfast program</p>

Table 4: IR 4.3 Improved Management of Schools

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	PARTICIPANTS	PRODUCTS	OUTCOME/RESULTS
<p><b>3. Providing governance and leadership training for schools, communities and parents</b></p> <p>Support to principals in creation of school development plans</p>	<p>(A description of the major NCE core activities, products and outcomes/ results the during the report period is available.) The Principals' Workshop on the curriculum and leadership plus the site and cluster based workshops described in Table 1.</p>	<p>All 72 NHP principals, NCE, PIU and, often at school sites, representatives from School Development Teams.</p>	<p>No contractor product</p> <p>Over 80 % of SDPs submitted by end of report period. (See *4 in Table 1 above.)</p>	<p>Eventual improvement of overall NHP school effectiveness and, specifically, math and reading instructional programs.</p>
<p><b>9 Integrating Databases</b></p> <p>Replacement of Network Server</p>	<p>This was a response by J&amp;A to an emergency created by the failure of the principal network server at the MOEC.</p>	<p>EMIS Specialist, MOEC, PIU Accountant, COP and Home Office of J&amp;A</p>	<p>Replacement server</p>	<p>Although responding to a special request, the server will fit into the planned interconnectivity scheme.</p>
<p><b>10 Linking Schools with the Jamaican Regional and National EMIS Network</b></p> <p>Administrative computers procured and inspected.</p>	<p>With the procurement and arrival of the computers for each school and regional office, they were made ready for installation</p>	<p>EMIS Specialist, J&amp;A, MOEC and USAID</p>	<p>90 administrative computers inspected, tested and inventoried and reported.*13</p>	<p>Support for the improvement of school management and decision making after installation and training.</p>
<p>Connectivity issues analyzed</p>	<p>Consultation with MOEC and follow-up to studies.</p>	<p>EMIS Specialist and MOEC</p>	<p>EMIS Consultant trip and status reports.*14 Local consultant identified and scope of work approved.</p>	<p>Eventual modernized and efficient management system</p>



## PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED

- **Temporary shortfall in funding.** This resulted in reduction of effort, a cutback on supplementary materials, limits to the contracting of consultants, and delay in study tour plans. Actions taken to resolve the situation included a visit by the J&A Officer in Charge to consult with the USAID Program Specialist and others to program existing funds and initiate ongoing discussions with AID about the timing and magnitude of intervention efforts.
- **Lack of school readiness for administrative computers.** Actions taken included the contracting of the Jamaica Computer Society Education Foundation to conduct a thorough school readiness study which was reported to the MOEC with the intent of having all sites reach at least minimal acceptable standards for computer installation. After the computers were fully tested and properly inventoried they were housed by USAID awaiting required approvals. Once agreement is reached, the JCSEF will complete additional tasks to assure proper installation.
- **Lack of knowledge and experience of principals with school development planning.** The area of school development planning required a great deal more effort on the part of the PIU than originally anticipated. Actions taken were included school development planning as part of the Principals' Workshop, support at the level of individual schools during school visitations and planning for additional training in close collaboration with NCE.

## STATEMENT OF WORK

At the close of the report period, December 1999, circumstances that influence the projected rate of accomplishment of New Horizons for Primary Schools have changed substantially from those present at the start of the period six months earlier. In particular, the shortfall in funding is certain to impact the high-cost activities, for example, under Interventions 7 (Educational Technology) and 10 (Linking Schools with Jamaican Regional and National EMIS Network) because of the cost of the required equipment alone. At the time of writing this report, it is apparent that the Year Two Annual Workplan will have to go back to the drawing board once again in order to assure that all activities are prioritized on the basis of cost and potential impact on improving achievement in mathematics and literacy in the targeted schools. It is evident that Interventions 1 and 2 must move ahead essentially as planned, with a watchful eye on

whether or not it would be wise to conduct even moderately sized cluster workshops which require substantial travel, meals or lodging. The training based on the in-depth diagnosis of NHP classroom teachers' needs must go on in a well-focused, orderly fashion in order to move ahead with both improved teaching and the implementation of effective, customized mathematics and reading programs in all project schools. There will be no study and participant observation tours for the foreseeable future and certainly not in the next six-month period. It is also foreseen that there will be few if any international advisors present in-country during this period with perhaps the exception of the EMIS Specialist once the difficulties associated with the administrative computers are resolved. This will afford the opportunity to have the completed computer software installed for each project school and the six regional offices. The Formative Evaluation Specialist is expected in May so as to conduct performance monitoring activities in a representative sample of project schools in accordance with the plan. It is advisable to nurture Intervention 7 (Educational Technology) now that it is taking on a much clearer, potentially productive direction. This, however, is not likely to require the presence of the international specialist in country for the next several months. While limitations might need to be made on the amount of funds to be spent on supplementary materials in math and reading (Intervention 6), it is expected that there will arrive a supply ample enough to facilitate the PIU subject-matter specialists' work in guiding project school teachers in the proper usage of these resources. The breakfast programs are bound to feel the effects of the shortfall regardless of how long it might last. This is due in part to the level of funding at this significant time during the school year. The Health and Nutrition Intervention may very well require further modifications as part of an overall amendment to the project.

Regardless of the "gloom" that this serious financial constraint poses at this time, there should be no room for an attitude of "doom". It is the position of the Juarez and Associates team, both in Jamaica and in the United States, that New Horizons has been successful to date due to the commitment of the stakeholders at all levels. This includes not only the PIU and Home Office staff. It includes the excited and neediest of children in the 72 schools, many of their parents, the approximate 700 teachers and principals, Territorial Education Officers, Regional Directors, and a host of other educators. The problems will continue to be confronted in a constructive manner. We do have sufficient funds to move ahead on the major paths to improved literacy and numberacy and we are fortunate to have the opportunity to work with an even more valuable wealth of human resources along the way.

## APPENDIX

- **Reference List: Products/Deliverables**
- **Semi-Annual Financial Status Report**

**Reference List: Products/Deliverables** (Cited in the Performance Charts Section)

1. Teacher Training Program Based on Diagnostic Needs of Schools (December 1999)
2. Report on Training Events Related to the Revised Primary Curriculum and Project Goals, July -December 1999 (Dec. 1999)
3. Principal's Resource Notebook (October 1999)
4. Report on the Status of Numeracy and Literacy Programs in Individual Schools (December 1999)
5. Exemplary List of Supplementary Materials (December 1999)
6. Supplementary Reading and Mathematics Materials Distribution List (December 1999)
7. Preliminary Report on the Educational Technology Intervention (December 1999)
8. Amendment to the New Horizons for Primary Schools Health and Nutrition Intervention (Summer 1999)
9. Needs and Resources Report on the New Horizons Schools Designated for Breakfast Programs
10. Procedures Manual for the NHP Breakfast Programs (December 1999)
11. Parenting Manual in Health (Draft)
12. Report on Focus Group Discussions with Parents (December 1999)
13. Report on Status of the Installation of Administrative Computers (December 1999)
14. Report on Status of Central and Regional Connectivity Initiatives (December 1999)

NB: Several other products/deliverables were completed and submitted to USAID during the report period, including among others consultant trip reports, one performance award fee report and one quarterly report. The last two were presented in July 1999.