



Educational Quality Improvement Program  
Policy ▪ Systems ▪ Management



**Sustainable Educational Improvement  
through Policy, Systems, and Management**



**The Educational Quality Improvement Program: EQUIP2 Partnership** for Educational Policy, Systems, and Management is a Leader with Associates (LWA) cooperative agreement managed by the Office of Education in the USAID Bureau for Economic Growth, Agriculture, and Trade (EGAT). The EQUIP2 mechanism combines technical leadership activities and “buy-in” awards from USAID missions and bureaus. This innovative program is designed to facilitate access to technical expertise and resources to support the goal of building educational quality in the national, sub-national, and cross-community levels. The **Leader** activities provide policy analysis and research, strengthen international networks, and build regional and national capacity. The **Associate Awards** are a “buy-in” mechanism enabling USAID bureaus and missions to access technical support quickly and easily from the EQUIP2 partnership.

The overall objectives of EQUIP2 are to work in partnership with governments and donor agencies to:

1. Formulate and implement education policy
2. Establish and improve educational systems and build organizational capacity
3. Strengthen management skills in the education system
4. Expand and improve the collection of data and the use of information in education



The focus on policy, systems, and management in EQUIP2 complements and supports the activities in the other two EQUIP programs, which concentrate on improvements at the school and classroom level (EQUIP1) and in youth training and employment (EQUIP3).

## ILLUSTRATIVE ACTIVITIES

The EQUIP2 partnership can support a wide range of activities, including:

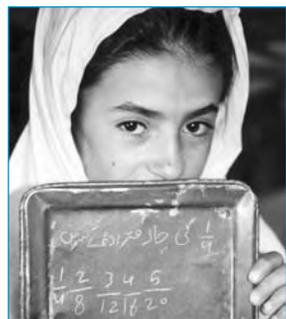
### ***Support Education for All and the Fast Track Initiative by***

- Strengthening ministry management capacity
- Improving absorptive capacity of governments to manage large budget programs
- Facilitating and advising on education sector strategies and implementation plans
- Strengthening Education Management Information Systems (EMIS)
- Conducting policy analysis and analytical background studies
- Developing effective monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems for accountability
- Strengthening assessment systems for tracking learning outcomes



### ***Implement projects in areas such as***

- Decentralization and school-based management
- Sustainable, cost-effective teacher development systems
- Basic and secondary education
- Education finance
- Community participation
- School to work transition
- Girls' education



### ***Support education programs with***

- Policy audits
- Organizational capacity assessment
- Monitoring and evaluation systems
- Educational research and research methodology
- Policy and issues briefs
- Assessment of EMIS systems and data quality
- Professional development and training

### ***Research key policy and implementation issues, for example***

- HIV/AIDS and the teaching workforce
- Impact of decentralization models on school quality and learning outcomes
- Alternative models for educating hard-to-reach populations
- Community participation and educational outcomes
- Sustainability and taking projects to scale
- Public and private sector solutions to educational challenges



## **POLICIES, SYSTEMS, AND MANAGEMENT:** The keys to sustainable improvement in educational quality

EQUIP2 addresses the systemic aspects of educational development that are essential for the sustainability, impact, and spread of reforms to the national scale. EQUIP2 provides recognized experts, state of the art knowledge, and current educational research in support of:

- **Formulating Policy:** EQUIP2 conducts analyses based on timely and reliable data to help countries formulate and adapt policies.
- **Implementing Policy:** Implementing policy reform is a complex operational challenge of navigating through the political and bureaucratic interests of stakeholders in national, regional, and local organizations. The EQUIP2 approach combines implementation with a facilitative process of dialogue, advocacy, and awareness building.
- **Establishing Systems:** Sustainable reform requires that innovations at the school and classroom level be supported by an integrated structure of procedures, incentives, tools, and operational policies. EQUIP2 focuses on the operational details of organizational change in key systems such as financial management, human resources, supervision, and monitoring and evaluation.
- **Strengthening Management:** EQUIP2 goes beyond training to address the entire system of incentives, procedures, skills, and knowledge needed to strengthen management capacity of individuals throughout the education system.
- **Improving Data Collection and Use:** EQUIP2 has a special responsibility for improving systems for the collection, analysis, and use of educational data to assure that timely, relevant, and accurate information is used for policy and management decisions.
- **Program Strategy and Design:** EQUIP2 supports USAID with technical assistance in program strategy and design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation.

## AED AND THE EQUIP2 PARTNERSHIP



**The Academy for Educational Development (AED)** is the lead organization for the global EQUIP2 partnership of education and development organizations, universities, and research institutions. An independent, not-for-profit organization, AED is a recognized leader in developing innovative and sustainable education policies and programs. AED has brought together partners from academia, the private sector, foundations, and NGOs to provide an extraordinary depth and breadth of knowledge and experience in policy and systems development and expertise in a wide range of areas: policy formulation and implementation, education management information systems, decentralization, technology, girls' education, strategic planning, teacher training systems, curriculum reform, community participation, and other elements of education quality improvement. The partnership includes fifteen major organizations and an expanding network of regional and national associates throughout the world.



**Aga Khan Foundation U.S.A**



**Michigan State University**



**American Institutes for Research**



**Mississippi Consortium for International Development**



**CARE USA**



**ORC Macro**



**East West Center**



**Research Triangle Institute**



**Education Development Center**



**University of Minnesota**



**International Rescue Committee**



**Institute for International Studies in Education at the University of Pittsburgh**



**Joseph P. Kennedy, Jr. Foundation**



**Learning Communities Network**



**Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children**

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## THE EQUIP2 MECHANISM

### Advantages of the Associate Award

- A previously competed procurement process.
- Flexibility in project design and focus.
- Award guidelines and simplified documentation requiring minimal administrative effort.
- The opportunity for open dialogue and negotiation between the mission and EQUIP2 throughout design and implementation.
- Direct control maintained by the Mission through its own Cognizant Technical Officer (CTO) and Contracts Officer (CO).
- A period of performance for Awards of up to five years that may extend beyond the end date of the Leader Award.
- An unlimited funding ceiling.
- Support by on-going Leader research and technical programs.
- Access to a strong and broad consortium of experts.

### The Associate Award Procedure

1. The Mission prepares a program description, indicating objectives, funds available, and the time frame for implementation.
2. The Mission contacts the USAID EQUIP2 CTO for concurrence that the program is within the purview of EQUIP2.
3. The Mission CO sends the Program Description to the EQUIP2 Project Director and CO at AED.
4. The Mission contacts the EQUIP2 Project Director to begin dialogue and negotiation.
5. EQUIP2 at AED submits a brief Application for Assistance consisting of the program approach, workplan, budget, and proposed staffing to the Mission.
6. The Mission CO completes a simple three page documentation to formalize the new cooperative agreement.