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# EVALUATION OF THE EXPANDING EDUCATION HORIZONS PROJECT

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR A NEW EDUCATION ACTIVITY TO BE INCLUDED  
IN USAID/JAMAICA'S STRATEGY FOR 2010-2014



October 2008

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The author's views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Agency for International Development or the United States Government.



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## List of Acronyms

<b>A/JBS</b>	Aguirre Division of Johnson, Bassin & Shaw, Inc.
<b>BELS</b>	Boys' Education Lighthouse Schools
<b>C-CETT</b>	Caribbean Centre of Excellence for Teacher Training
<b>CF</b>	Consolidated Fund
<b>CIDA</b>	Canadian International Development Agency
<b>COP</b>	Chief of Party
<b>DFID</b>	Department for International Development
<b>EBSP</b>	Enhancement of Basic Schools Project
<b>EEH</b>	Expanding Educational Horizons
<b>ETP</b>	Education Transformation Project
<b>ETT</b>	Education Transformation Team
<b>GAIN</b>	Grade Four Numeracy Test
<b>GOJ</b>	Government of Jamaica
<b>HEART/NTA</b>	Human Employment and Resources Training/National Training Agency
<b>ICT</b>	Information and Communications Technology
<b>IDB</b>	Inter-American Development Bank
<b>IEQ</b>	Improving Educational Quality
<b>IR</b>	Intermediate Result
<b>JSAS</b>	Jamaica Schools Administrative Software
<b>LBLAP</b>	Literature Based Language Arts Project
<b>MOE</b>	Ministry of Education
<b>NET</b>	National Education Trust
<b>NGOs</b>	Non-Governmental Organizations
<b>NHP</b>	New Horizons Project
<b>PESP</b>	Primary Education Support Project
<b>PIU</b>	Project Implementation Unit
<b>PM</b>	Prime Minister
<b>PMP</b>	Performance Management Plan
<b>PTA</b>	Parent Teachers Association
<b>REAs</b>	Regional Educational Authorities
<b>ROSE</b>	Reform of Secondary Education
<b>SO</b>	Strategic Objective
<b>SOW</b>	Statement of Work
<b>TA</b>	Technical Assistance
<b>UNESCO</b>	United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization
<b>UNICEF</b>	United Nations Children's Fund
<b>USAID</b>	United States Agency for International Development
<b>USG</b>	United States Government
<b>WB</b>	World Bank

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- Last, but not least, grateful appreciation is given to the many organizations and individuals in the private and NGO sectors that are partnering with EEH schools and have and continue to contribute generously to the improvement of the schools and the primary school sector in Jamaica.



## **Executive Summary**

### **Background**

This report presents the findings of the A/JBS evaluation team's review of the Expanding Educational Horizons (EEH) primary education program. The review encompassed: the project's design and goals, its impact since its inception in January 2006, the results achieved, the relative effectiveness of its inputs, and recommendations for future activities and best practices for follow-on and future Mission activities.

The team also assessed the extent to which key, successful elements of the EEH program might be expanded to non-project schools. This assessment factored in the activities of the MOE's Educational Transformation Team, the activities of other donors and programs, including PESP and C-CETT, and the environment for primary education development. The results were communicated to and discussed with USAID and the Ministry of Education (MOE).

Special attention was given to identifying successful practices for improving boys' educational performance and effective approaches to increasing involvement of private sector and civil society groups in primary education activities in EEH schools and the larger school system.

The project has provided technical and supervisory assistance to 71 schools across Jamaica. While the initial target was the group of students in Grades 1-4 (ages 6-9) in the identified schools, approximately 30,000 students have benefited. The work with these schools was built on the successes and lesson learned during the previous New Horizons Project (NHP). New emphases in EEH included gender, specifically the education of boys, socialization to improve behavior, the employment in schools of data-driven decision making, and the use of instructional technology to support teaching and learning.

### **Summary of the Evaluation**

The Mission's objectives for the evaluation encompass three basic issues that were also the focus of the team's work: EEH's accomplishments; its impact to date; and whether and how can it be incorporated in the national primary education system and, thus, replicated.

The evaluators found that in all significant respects, EEH's school development work has been a major success. The team identified some areas of concern, which are addressed in its recommendations regarding EEH priorities between now and the end of the project in December 2009. However these concerns do not detract from the team's broad endorsement of what EEH has accomplished with the schools and the associated communities.

Regarding replication, the team concluded that the best way for USAID to obtain major returns from its 10-year investment in Jamaican primary school development is to partner with the MOE on implementing selected components of the Education Transformation Project (ETP).

## **Education Transformation Project**

The ETP was established approximately a year ago to implement the recommendations of the 2004 Task Force on Educational Reform. An Educational Transformation Team (ETT) has been formed to lead the process. Donor involvement has already been significant and is expected to increase substantially over the next year through new sizable World Bank(WB) and Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) loans.

While ETP began under the previous administration, the current Minister of Education has endorsed the transformation efforts as a bipartisan move initiated by a former leader of his political party. This bi-partisan transformation effort is unprecedented in Jamaica and has received the approval of and significant support from the donor community, particularly the IDB and the WB.

There are significant needs for the collaboration of other donors to provide technical assistance, training, and other support for key elements of the reform agenda, including:

- Education policy and research
- Development of school improvement service capacities and systems in the new Regional Education Authorities
- Teacher education and in-service teacher training
- Leadership training – MOE, Regional School Improvement Officers, Principals
- Assisting in bringing intervention strategies and tools for science and math up to the level of literacy.

Though there is interest on the part of other donors, there has been little progress so far in finalizing support. USAID is essentially in a position to decide in which areas it wishes to work.

In the team's view, the REAs represent the best entry point for ensuring a strong, sustainable return on USAID's 10 year investment in EEH/NHP. The REAs will need proven, reliable models on which to base their services to the schools, thus providing an excellent opportunity to fulfill EEH's sustainability and replication goals. The professional staff of the REAs, from the top down, will need training or re-training to make a successful conversion from the old-style inspectorate-type organizations that existed before the reforms and the service and developmental kind of institutions envisaged. Finally, the long-run sustainability of the 71 EEH/NHP schools will depend on continuing to receive clinical support that under the reform plan will be provided by the REAs.

The team believes that assisting the new policy-oriented MOE with planning and developing its expanded policy functions would complement the REA activity nicely, by underpinning and sustaining the reform process and helping ensure a strong, supportive environment for USAID to work with the REAs, should that be USAID's decision.

Finally, if the ETP is to succeed, it must include a strong, flexible training component. At a minimum, a capacity to train and/or re-train in-service teachers, principals, school boards, parents, and a wide range of education professionals must be created. Doing so it will likely require recourse to a range of sources, including government, the pre-service teacher training

institutions, NGOs, and the private sector. Efforts to institutionalize these training resources to provide long-term support to the sector should be included in the training plan.

### **EEH Priorities for the Remainder of the Project**

The time remaining between the time when this report is completed and delivered and the end of the project will be approximately 14 months. During this period of time, the team recommends that the project focus on the priority actions listed under Recommendation 2, most of which are intended to highlight the project and increase its chances of being accepted as a prime source of best practices and experience by the ETP.

### **Recommendations**

Recommendation 1: That EEH continue to perform its work through the project's end in December 2009.

Recommendation 2: That EEH in the remaining time available:

- Seek ways to compare learning results in project and non-project schools. This is critical for establishing that EEH has been a success in this critical area.
- Graduate more schools and accelerate weaning of graduated schools.
- Commission an outside team to help review and document EEH best practices and, in selected cases, to prepare manuals on their implementation.
- Analyze and prepare recommendations for the MOE on effective practices for raising the performance of low-performing schools.
- Make a renewed effort in the gender/boys education area to move beyond sensitization to development of an inventory of best practices in Jamaica and elsewhere and, if time and resources permit, the design and launching of a controlled pilot effort.
- Seek to work more closely with the ETT by offering assistance in numeracy, an area in which ETT has a real need.
- Launch the project website and use it as a prime vehicle for disseminating project best practices and other information to multiple audiences.

Recommendation 3: That USAID enter into discussions with the MOE regarding the establishment of a partnership with the Ministry for assisting the ETP, under which USAID would concentrate its assistance on the two ETP components described above.

Recommendation 4: That USAID discuss with the MOE the commissioning of a study of ETP training needs and options for meeting them. Depending on the results of that study, consideration should be given by USAID to helping implement selected recommendations.

The team is convinced that if USAID/Jamaica implements the above recommendations, it will achieve two key, strategic objectives. The first is to replicate the essentials of the EEH and related components of CETT/Jamaica on a Jamaica-wide scale, as integral parts of the Education Transformation Project. The second is to focus the Mission's education strategy for FY 2010-2014 on a sustained program to support national education transformation efforts, in selected areas, thus encompassing but also transcending the earlier pilot efforts.



## Introduction

### Evaluation Background

The A/JBS evaluation team's objectives were to review and validate the Expanding Educational Horizons (EEH) primary education program's design and goals; assess the program's impact since its inception in 2005; measure the results achieved; determine the relative effectiveness of its inputs; and recommend future Mission activities in education.

The team also assessed the extent to which key, successful elements of the EEH program might be expanded to non-project schools. The assessment factored in the activities of the Education Transformation Team, other donors and significant programs, such as PESP and C-CETT, as well as the policy, human resource, managerial, infrastructure, budget, and political environment for primary education development. The results were communicated to and discussed with USAID and the Ministry of Education (MOE).

Special attention was given to identifying successful practices for improving boys' educational performance, raising boys' literacy and numeracy, increasing the involvement of males in the Jamaican education sector, and developing more comprehensive community resources for boys' education, such as mentors and male role models.

Finally, the team sought to identify and recommend effective approaches to increasing involvement of private sector and civil society groups in primary education activities in EEH schools and the larger school system.

Qualitative evaluation methods were the primary means employed, including:

- Structured, in-depth interviews with project personnel, USAID staff, selected MOE staff, educators and educational experts at various levels, principals, teachers, students, parents, school board members, school partners, and community and business leaders.
- Structured school site visits to a select sample of 12 schools.

### Program Background

USAID/Jamaica's FY 2005- FY 2009 strategy's goal is to achieve *Transformational Change to Accelerate Sustainable and Equitable Growth in a More Competitive World*.

The Education Strategic Objective (SO12), is *Improved Education of Targeted Jamaican Youth*. SO12 has two Intermediate Results:

- (IR1) Improved literacy and numeracy in targeted schools;
- (IR3) Increased stakeholder support for transformational education.

The EEH project, a five-year \$10.8 million activity, serves as the center-piece of the education strategy. The bulk of the project provides technical and supervisory assistance to 71 schools across Jamaica. While the main target has been students in Grades 1-4 (ages 6-9), approximately 30,000 students have benefited. The primary school component of EEH built on the successes and lessons learned during the New Horizons Project (NHP), which worked in the same schools from 1998 to 2005. New components added to EEH addressed such other issues as gender and

socialization, the use of data-driven decision making, and increased emphasis on instructional technology to support teaching and learning.

Besides the primary school activity, six non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in Jamaica are assisting out-of-school youth to prepare themselves for re-entry into the formal education system. (The NGO portion of EEH is not included in this evaluation.)

The primary school component has been carried out by a Project Implementation Unit (PIU), which has specialists, and consultants in Numeracy, Literacy, Educational Technology, Gender, School Management (emphasis on the use of software), Private Sector support and Communication. In the 2006-2007 school year, the Ministry of Education (MOE) provided twenty-four Resource Specialists split between Literacy and Numeracy to support the fieldwork through on-site visits and training.

The primary school component's goals are to:

- Improve performance in Mathematics and Language Arts;
- Improve performance of boys in Mathematics and English Language resulting from the introduction of gender sensitive approaches aimed at addressing the sub-optimal performance of boys within the education system;
- Mobilize private sector companies, parents, and stakeholders organized through a systemic and integrated mechanism to support the achievement of results;
- Improve participation of parents in support (e.g., PTAs or similar school governance) given to schools and in the education of their children;
- Increase the number of out-of-school students taught mathematics and reading; and
- Develop sustainability directly, through a comprehensive sustainability plan, and indirectly through strategies to collaborate with the Ministry of Education (MOE) on replicating selected EEH best practices in non-project schools.

EEH is overseen by a joint Government of Jamaica (GOJ) and USAID Steering Committee. The contractor is Juarez & Associates, Inc.

## **Education Development Environment**

Education for development has been an emphasis of successive Jamaican Governments since independence in 1962. Over the subsequent decades, plans, policy documents and initiatives have been drafted and commissioned in order to improve the educational quality and outputs in the Jamaican system. Years of planning have yielded accomplishments in the primary education sector including compulsory school attendance, a national curriculum (revised 1999), a high percentage of college trained teachers, and policies guiding different spheres of educational thought and development.

Over the years, many areas of Jamaica's education development have been "projectized" or funded by donor and international lending agencies. Primary education has received significant funding of this kind. The table below outlines the major projects funded in primary education over the past decade.

Table 1: Summary of Selected Educational Initiatives in Jamaica 1997 – 2007<sup>1</sup>

<b>Project</b>	<b>Partners</b>	<b>Description</b>
Primary Education Improvement Program (PEIP) II	Government of Jamaica and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB)	The PEIP II Project ended in 1997 the key activities included development of National Assessment Programs, curriculum revision, materials infusion, in-service teacher training & infrastructure
New Horizons Project (NHP)	MOE, USAID, Juarez and Associates (Contractors)	1998-2005. Its aim was to increase student literacy and numeracy performance in 72 selected primary schools by providing quality educational support through a menu of interventions for these designated “low performing schools”
Expanding Educational Horizons (EEH)	MOE, USAID, Juarez and Associates (Contractors)	This project is a follow up to the 71 original NHP schools. In addition to the focus of NHP sustainability is a key component.
Jamaica All Age Schools Project (JAASP)	MOE, DFID (UK) and University of Wolverhampton (Contractors)	Launched in 2000 to correct serious deficiencies, which were identified particularly in rural All-Age schools.
Primary Education Support Project (PESP)	MOE, IDB	Focused on effective curriculum implementation (and ultimately improved performance in schools) by providing the necessary pedagogical, material, infrastructure and logistical support to primary education in Jamaica.
Caribbean Centre of Excellence in Teacher Training (CCETT)	USAID, Joint Board of Teacher Education Jamaica & Eastern Caribbean	Launched in 2002 to: Provide innovative leadership to strengthen reading instruction and improve reading skills of primary students in the first three grades.
Literature Based Language Arts Project (LBLAB)	School of Education, University of the West Indies	Focused on providing a model for literature-based instruction through provision of selected children’s literature for primary school classrooms and methodological support for participating teachers
Improving Education Quality (IEQ)	USAID American Institute of Research/Joint Board of Teacher Education	Revision of four primary teacher education courses (including Math, language arts & literacy education) focused on curriculum alignment and teacher educator support
Education Transformation Project	Government of Jamaica	Commissioned in direct response to the task force report on education (2004) with mandates to address modernization the MOE, improvement of schools facilities and infrastructure, Curriculum, Teaching and Learning Behavior Change and Community School Leadership and Management Communications and Stakeholder Relations

While the projects outlined above have generally been successful in their own terms, the multiple implementing agencies and partners have resulted in fragmentation of efforts.

<sup>1</sup> Lambert, Clement. *Literacy Initiatives in Jamaica 1997 – 2007*, Bethlehem Moravian College Conference, Feb 27, 2007.

The current Education Transformation Project (ETP), which is being administered by the Education Transformation Team (ETT) has been charged with bringing coherence and efficiency to the system. While ETP began under the previous administration, the current Minister of Education has given strong, bipartisan support to the program. The bi-partisan character of the effort is unprecedented in Jamaica. It has received the approval of and significant support from the donor community.

ETP, which was created to implement the report of the 2004 Task Force on Educational Reform in Jamaica, is the critical element in the current education development environment. This ambitious project is creating the first ever education development policy framework in the country, developing and implementing a major re-structuring and de-centralization of the education system, and drafting and beginning to implement strategies for education reform in a range of critical areas.

The core aspects of the program are:

- Modernization of the education system
- Curriculum, measurement, accountability
- Leadership and management
- Infrastructure
- Behavioral change

Among the key changes planned are:

- Focusing the central Ministry on policy and strategy and away from operational matters;
- Creating new Regional Education Authorities (REAs) with greater autonomy and a much stronger focus on improving schools
- Creating three new agencies to focus on the main goals of the transformation: improving quality; curriculum and assessment; and transforming the teaching profession. The new agencies will be: The National Education Inspectorate, the Curriculum and Assessment Agency, and the Jamaica Teaching Council.

The ETT has given first priority to the literacy area and to establishing the Inspectorate and the Teaching Council. The policy area and the REAs will reportedly be addressed next. (See Annex 1 for additional ETP details.)

The following donors have been involved with ETP:

- CIDA and DFID funded the 2006 diagnostic study.
- CIDA and the GOJ funded the inception stage (9/07 to 3/08).
- The World Bank (WB) is currently negotiating a new loan. Reportedly, this will be a quick start activity to begin to “fit the pieces together” and provide resources to fund immediate, high priority work, pending the availability of large, long-term Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) support in about a year’s time.
- The WB has already approved a \$15M loan for early childhood education.
- IDB is developing a proposed \$30M policy-based, support loan to provide long-term support for the transformation effort.
- UNICEF and UNESCO are providing technical assistance (TA) in the behavior change area.



## **The Primary Education Support Project (PESP)**

The Primary Education Support Project (PESP) began in 2000, with a \$33 Million loan from the IDB and an additional \$4 Million in contributions from the GOJ. The goals of the project were threefold: to help implement the revised primary school curriculum, increase efficiency through rationalization of teacher educational management capacity at all levels, and enhance equity in the delivery of educational services to children from lower socio-economic backgrounds through targeted interventions in literacy, numeracy, attendance, and civics.

PESP is officially expected to finish at the end of December. The IDB and MOE are reportedly negotiating an additional \$12M loan over one year to enable PESP to finish its work in seven schools.

## **Caribbean CETT**

Caribbean CETT, headquartered in Jamaica, has had good, technical success in its pilot projects with primary schools accessed through the teachers colleges. During the initial phase, the program focused heavily on the pilot schools, postponing efforts to garner support for replicating its approaches in the national system until the product proved effective. This may have been a strategic mistake, as reportedly the MOE was not significantly involved nor kept well-informed during this first phase, creating a lack of understanding and support from the Ministry.

When the ETT began its work, several discussions were held with CETT regarding its work and potential contributions to the transformation effort. There was reportedly a high degree of appreciation of the quality of CETT's work, but CETT was not assigned a specific role. (The PESP project's literacy education approach was eventually designated as the official model for the ETP.)

CETT's greatest asset is its in-service teacher training package. This clear strength, as well as EEH's similarly successful experience, should be given consideration for inclusion in ETP training programs.

## **Education Finance**

According to the Planning Institute of Jamaica's 2007 Economic and Social Survey<sup>2</sup>, education in Jamaica is financed by the government, the private sector, and community and faith-based entities. Families also contribute in the form of cost sharing at the secondary and tertiary levels. Families are also responsible for partial payment for services at all levels, such as school lunches, uniforms, and books.

In 2007/08, education constituted 12.6 per cent of the national budget, a sizable increase of 6.7 per cent over the 2006/07 allocation. Approximately J\$42.2 billion was allocated for recurrent expenditure of which 91 per cent was earmarked for salaries and other emoluments. Primary education's share was 32.5 per cent or J\$15.3 billion.

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<sup>2</sup> Planning Institute of Jamaica, Economic and Social Survey 2007.

In 2007/08 capital spending for education increased from J\$3.5 billion in 2006/07 to J\$5.7. The increase was due to additional support for the ETP and Northwestern Schools Projects. Of the capital budget, 22.6 per cent related to multilateral and bilateral projects, with the major portion, almost 46 per cent, for the IDB's Primary Education Support Project (PESP). The WB's Reform of Secondary Education (ROSE) project received 38 per cent, the Enhancement of Basic Schools Project (EBSP) 14.8 per cent, while 1.8 per cent went to Improved Education of Targeted Jamaican Youth, and EEH received 0.2 per cent.

### ***Budget Issues Resulting from the ETP***

The biggest budget challenge to the ETP project is funding for infrastructure. The greatest expenses are for improving existing schools, building new ones to provide places for all students and reduce class sizes, and equipping the schools with furniture and equipment. An ambitious plan has been developed, but it may be too costly, even spread over 10-15 years. In response, the Prime Minister (PM) has proposed development of a National Education Trust (NET) for infrastructure development, to which private sector, diaspora, and other contributions would be directed. Another part of the PM's initiative, reportedly, is to begin depositing the proceeds of the education tax into the NET rather than the Consolidated Fund (CF), where they currently flow.

Another major budget challenge is funding Information and Communications Technology (ICT) plans. With the assistance of Chilean consultants, a \$50M proposal has been developed. Reportedly, this is currently stalled due to the high price tag.

### **Technical Assistance**

According to the ETT director, there is a great need for external assistance to provide TA to assist with carrying out different aspects of the education modernization agenda. The top priorities include:

- Education policy and research.
- Development of school improvement service capacities and systems in the REAs.
- Teacher education and in-service teacher training.
- Leadership training – MOE, Regional School Improvement Officers, Principals.
- Assistance with intervention strategies and tools to bring science and math up to the level of literacy.

### **EEH Evaluation Findings: January 2006 to September 2008**

The Statement of Work (SOW) for the evaluation presented a series of objectives. These objectives are re-stated below in question form and in italics, together with the team's responses, based on its findings. Information on other major findings follows the questions and responses.

*1. Were the overall design and goals of the project valid?*

The team believes that EEH's overall design and goals for the primary school component of the project did constitute a valid approach to primary school improvement in Jamaica. The

approach was an integral one, including school management, governance, teaching and methodological reforms, educational technology, special attention to gender issues, involvement of parents and communities, and addressing sustainability through public-private partnerships.

2. *Are the project interventions effective and is there good synergy in terms of their relative contribution and impact on improving numeracy and literacy among primary school children?*

Generally, the EEH interventions received favorable reviews from the respondents. Among those receiving the highest praise were the training and educational technology components.

## **Training**

The EEH approach to training assumed multiple approaches. Training activities included national, cluster, and school-based workshops as well as on-site activities including coaching, demonstration teaching, and clinical supervision. All the training activities were designed and conducted by PIU staff.

National Residential Workshops are reportedly held on an annual basis. These workshops provide professional development activities for principals, resource teachers and other invited partners. The workshops are usually three to five days in duration and promote sharing of strategies and reaffirmation of commitment to the project and the MOE.

Cluster workshops are held among schools according to their proximity to each other. These workshops are conducted in selected intervention areas and can be either residential or non-residential.

School based workshops are in-school training sessions conducted either by education specialists or resource teachers. These workshops generally involve the entire staff of a school and address areas identified as needing special attention at a particular school or in an effort to share information and strategies from national and cluster workshops.

School visits and demonstrations occur on a regular basis especially in non-graduated schools. Regular visits are conducted by the education specialists who engage in a variety of activities including: classroom observations and feedback, demonstration teaching, and interaction and feedback with school administration. In addition PIU staff, including the chief of party, engage in school visits to conduct training, monitoring, or provide motivation to the leadership and staff.

## ***Participant Feedback on Training***

EEH Training activities received high commendation from participants. Principals highlighted the value of their training experiences in terms of boosting their morale to providing guidance on educational and instructional leadership as well as garnering public private partnership support. They found the workshops particularly invigorating since they were given time for collegial sharing and motivational sessions. In addition, they gained insight into the training of

their resource teachers in literacy, numeracy, technology and gender. Resource teachers were equally complimentary of the training offered by EEH. They benefited from collegial sharing at national and cluster workshops as well as receiving pedagogical guidance from ‘experts’ in the various disciplines.

### ***Training Concern***

Despite the reports of participant satisfaction with the EEH training, there are some concerns that have surfaced from the documentation on training as well as participant feedback. These include the absence of:

- An articulated guiding philosophy and strategy underpinning the training activities and training indicators;
- An overall project training plan;
- Formal training evaluation and feedback mechanisms;
- Pre-service teacher education involvement;
- Tangible incentives for resource teachers who participate in training; and
- Lack of formalized ties to relevant sections of the Ministry of Education and other primary education projects.

### ***Suggestions for Training***

The team suggests the following to promote partnerships in training:

- Create a protocol for interaction with education officers in the Core Curriculum unit as well as in the regions.
- Produce a training plan that provides guidance on EEH principles and the *modus operandi* for training.
- Work at immediately addressing an incentive system for resource teachers through certification, and articulation with selected Jamaican institutions.

See Annex 2 for information on the current teacher education and training scene.

### **Literacy**

There are several literacy initiatives operating concurrently in the Jamaican primary education landscape. They include: the work of the ETT, led by a National Literacy Coordinator; the Literacy 1-2-3 activities of the PESP project; EEH; and the Caribbean CETT. There are no formalized relationships among these projects concerning how they should work together and their respective areas of focus. For example, while EEH and C-CETT are two USAID funded projects, there appears to have been very little collaboration and consultation between them and EEH personnel were unable to provide any insight on the CETT project and vice-versa.

The evaluation team’s work revealed that there should be little conflict between the EEH and PESP/Literacy 1-2-3 approaches. Literacy 1-2-3 focuses on creating local culture sensitive materials for use in grades one to three of the Jamaican primary school system. Teachers have reported that the EEH literacy intervention has better prepared them to handle the materials produced by Literacy 1-2-3. The use of the “big books” as well as the language experience and

awareness approach is generally viewed as endorsement of the strategies covered under EEH training.

ETT views literacy as a concern from early childhood through secondary levels. While the ETT's goal is to improve literacy nationally, it is initially concentrating on low performing schools in selected regions and clusters, through the efforts of regional and cluster literacy coordinators. ETT's curriculum work stream is implementing measures to improve literacy and numeracy performance nationally. In light of the ETT's responsibility and their relative inexperience as a unit, EEH is strategically poised to establish formal relations with the ETT and provide support in the areas where it has demonstrated strengths.

It has become evident that the rather haphazard distribution of literacy projects in the Jamaican literacy landscape has had a negative effect. Projects have been accused of territorialism and unwarranted competition for national legitimacy. The Education Transformation team has been charged with consolidating the various projects and partners to help create harmonious relationships that promote literacy improvement in Jamaica. However, after over a year in operation, the literacy arm of the ETT has not established any formalized linkages with these projects. This is an area that deserves early attention so that literacy development resources can be consolidated and configured to maximize benefits to the Jamaican children. This requires consultation and written agreement on the roles of the different projects in the Jamaica education system. Undoubtedly, there is room for all existing projects, however, to avoid overlap and rivalry there should be a clear definition of the roles of each.<sup>3</sup>

### **Numeracy**

There have been very few numeracy interventions in Jamaican primary schools. EEH efforts to improve children's numeracy competencies over the past two years are far superior to other national schemes. There is little doubt that numeracy performance has improved in EEH schools, though the improvement is difficult to measure since the grade four numeracy test (GAIN) is new, therefore providing little room for comparison of scores. Comparison of EEH schools' performance on the GAIN test with non-project schools is important. However, this was deemed infeasible following the recent test, since there were discrepancies in scoring that would render such comparisons invalid.

A notable EEH achievement was the adoption of the project-developed GAIN test by the MOE. There remains a need to develop an item bank for the GAIN test, and the MOE has committed to its development. In addition to measuring numeracy, the GAIN test has resulted in increased collaboration among the education partners. There has been consultation (to different degrees) with the Student Assessment Unit, the Mathematics section, the Education Transformation Team and central Ministry in the development and adoption of this measure as a national tool.

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<sup>3</sup> The team understands that MOE recently established a committee, with the Acting Permanent Secretary as its chair, to address this issue.

While there is a national numeracy policy<sup>4</sup>, Jamaica lacks a national consensus on the path to improve numeracy in schools. While EEH embraces the use of technology in promoting numeracy acquisition, the Education Transformation Team advocates the use of less technology and more simple tools and materials to promote mathematical competencies. This ETT perception is not closely aligned with the national numeracy policy as the policy refers to the importance of technology in promoting numeracy.

## **Technology**

The PIU team, as well as the project partners, have explicitly recognized that technology supports the development of literacy and numeracy. A major activity in the project is to “encourage full utilization of technology tools to enhance literacy and numeracy.” There have been significant investments in the technological dimension during the life of EEH, such as the training of technology resource teachers. A careful examination of the cost-effectiveness of the approach is needed, as that is likely to be a key determinant in whether technology applications are adopted for national implementation.

Support for technology spans materials acquired during the life of the EEH project as well as during the life of its predecessor, NHP. EEH school respondents have generally not been able to distinguish between technological inputs from the two projects. Participants itemize devices received since the inception of NHP as a part of the project input. It is noteworthy that the EEH technology team continues to provide support for the use of the devices acquired over the life of both projects. During the evaluation team’s visits, EEH schools generally fell into one of two categories related to technology. One category of schools embraced technology and used the devices as enhancements to learning. Most teachers interviewed in these schools were on board and the major complaint was that there were not enough devices to meet the instructional needs of the school. In the second grouping of schools, technological concerns revolved around the resource teacher.

During the team’s school visits, the team observed technology in action in selected classrooms. There is no doubt that when technological devices are used in classrooms students’ interest was heightened, thus promoting learning.

The issue of sustainability surfaced during the exploration of the technology component of EEH. Schools tended to be heavily dependent on the project for supplying, maintaining and replenishing their technology stock. Of particular concern was the level of dependence for even small items. One school (outfitted with an entire computer lab) expressed the concern that they did not receive a digital camera promised by the project. This suggests reluctance on the part of these participants to seek innovative ways of acquiring technological aids to support those supplied by the project.

An additional concern arose in the conversation with the National Numeracy Coordinator for the ETT. Her views were diametrically opposed to the EEH practice of using computers as aids to learning. Since the ETT has the responsibility of consolidating initiatives, it is important that

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<sup>4</sup> Ministry of Education, Youth and Culture. *Mathematics and Numeracy Policy*, May 2003. Available from <http://moeyc.gov.jm/policies/numeracypolicy.pdf>

consensus be sought on the use of technology in promoting learning in Jamaican Primary schools.

### ***Jamaica Schools Administrative Software***

While JSAS is predominantly an administrative tool, it is also an important component of the instructional systems present in the EEH schools. The capacity of the software to store data on attendance and performance on tests holds potential for improved assessment practices in schools. Furthermore, the software also enhances the role of the principal as an instructional leader. In schools where JSAS is being successfully used, there are reports of successful troubleshooting of performance-related problems and implementation of interventions to address them. Principals reporting that JSAS was working well in their schools also spoke of the benefits of both the computer generated information for school development planning as well as professional development in their schools. Generally, school which had all teachers participating in the JSAS data entry process seemed to be more up-to-date in the maintenance of school and classroom records.

A negative finding related to the software was teachers' concern about the need to duplicate work despite claims that use of JSAS would lessen their administrative tasks. For example, teachers who enter attendance through JSAS are still required to mark a hard copy attendance register. This emphasizes the need to make the transition from the traditional modes of record-keeping to the technologically tried and proven method.

### **Gender**

The EEH project design spoke specifically to addressing gender issues in general and the underachievement of boys in particular. The team's evaluation revealed that individual schools took the initiative to address the underachievement of boys in their schools. However, there was no clear overall project plan to achieve this goal. The project configuration of a part-time Gender Specialist and a part-time Gender Consultant did not match the emphasis placed on the goal to address the underachievement of boys. The EEH Gender Specialist also expressed dissatisfaction with the resources allocated to this component of the project. She mentioned that more time and resources would be needed to implement a meaningful gender intervention. Participants were appreciative of the sensitization workshops. However, many respondents thought the sessions lacked the practical application of strategies needed for use in their school and classroom contexts.

Despite the inadequacies of the EEH gender intervention, individual schools have identified innovative strategies to improve the performance of boys in their schools. At least three schools created models for addressing the under-performance of boys. These include:

- Creation of boys only classes within a coeducational school context.
- Increased recruitment and employment of male teachers.
- Creation of mentorship programs for boys.

Boys only classes were created within three of the schools visited. These schools engaged in testing and placement of boys in selected grades in these classes. In two cases male teachers

were assigned to the boys' class while in the third case a 'strong' female teacher was selected to teach the boys' class. Participants reported initial resistance to this separation by teachers, parents and children. However, this configuration was later accepted. They reported greater participation of boys in the boy's only class as well as improved performance on national examinations. It must be noted that the 'boys only' innovation can not be solely credited for improving boys' performance. Teacher competence and the social networks created to support the boys were important contributors to the process.

Increased recruitment and employment of male teachers was evident in one school in particular. This school had a total of sixteen teachers, seven of whom were male. The principal of the school, while endorsing the necessity to have male role models, spoke to the complexity of the issues surrounding gender and the importance of leadership in improving the performance of boys. While many of the innovations were initiated by the principal, she attributes earlier efforts of the NHP to grant them subscriptions to the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) publications that had useful articles on gender and related to the underperformance of boys.

Mentorship programs for boys occurred in a few schools. These ranged from the creation of values and attitudes clubs to the assigning of individual students to teacher mentors. Both were viewed as having a positive influence on the boys who were exposed to these interventions.

While gender issues have come to the fore in many educational circles in Jamaica, a clear gender policy remains absent. The ETT has not articulated a gender strategy. There is an urgent need to empirically assess the gender situation in Jamaican primary schools and suggest a menu of strategies to address the gaps in boys' performance.

➤ *What strategies can be employed to improve the performance of boys?*

The issue of boys' underachievement is not unique to Jamaica. Countries including the United Kingdom and Australia have identified this as a major problem since the mid 1990's and have conducted research and implemented projects to address this issue. One such project is the successful Boys' Education Lighthouse Schools (BELS) program, which operated in Australia from 2003-2005, and supported over 550 schools nationally to develop effective teaching practices and strategies that work with boys. The project raises important issues and describes the effects of a menu of intervention strategies customized for different clusters of schools. It was built on the premise that in addressing the underachievement of boys it was necessary to:

- Identify and respond to individual learning styles;
- Foster an effective school culture based on quality teaching practices;
- Make learning relevant and connected;
- Establish positive relationships with students; and
- Build supportive classroom environments in which students feel valued and are encouraged to take risks.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Australian Government Initiative. *Boys' Education Lighthouse Schools Stage Two Final Report 2006*. Available online: <http://www.dest.gov.au/NR/rdonlyres/8E2B8B17-A23E-4F04-9F2D-68115ED7433B/16332/BELS2FinalReport1.pdf>



Key components in this intervention were research, teacher training, and interweaving pedagogy and socialization.

It would be a useful contribution by stakeholders in the Jamaican education system to invest in research on what works with boys. This would entail the following:

- A state of the art review on boys' education with a compendium of dominant issues as well as strategies that have worked elsewhere.
- An exploration of issues related to Jamaican boys' educational performance through the conduct of surveys, interviews, and case studies of schools that have met relative success with their interventions of boys.
- Provide useful intervention models and strategies that might address the issue of underachievement of boys

Both the literature and experience of the EEH schools that have embarked on programs to address boys' underperformance suggest that there are essential components of any successful boys' education program. These include:

- Self image development;
- Sharing effective parenting strategies;
- Emphasis on classroom strategies – including interest-based instruction; and
- Maintaining boys' individuality in terms of interests and learning styles (avoiding gender stereotypes)

It is with this in mind that the EEH project needs to take the gender component to another level. Necessary steps in the process include moving beyond sensitization and providing innovative strategies for teaching boys through demonstration workshops and site-based meetings. There is also the need to provide media tips for educating and socializing boys at school at home and in the wider community.

A key factor in ensuring the sustainability of the gender intervention is to form important ties with the Education Transformation efforts. Since there is no formal approach to addressing boys' underperformance in the transformation efforts this is an opportunity for EEH to form a strategic alliance with the ETT to address this important social and pedagogical concern.

### **Replicability**

EEH best practices are all replicable. The ETP process is such, however, that in some cases such as with educational technology, many differing opinions often lead to substantial debate. Hence, EEH's practices are unlikely to be adopted wholesale. The technology component could be the most vulnerable, due to higher costs, though it may in fact be cost-effective. The project's practices are certainly competitive. The real question is not whether one or another project-proven practice is adopted for national application. It is whether, in the end, a strong, up-to-date series of proven practices is put in place in a system that needs all the help it can get.

## The Environment for Partnerships

- *What is the nature and impact of public/private partnerships in project schools and how might these be expanded or improved?*

Increased stakeholder support for transformational education aims to foster private sector consciousness of the links between productivity and educational provision, and for partnerships to develop based upon institutional needs and interests of donors. Partnership has been defined by project personnel as “an alliance between two or more parties to jointly define a developmental problem and contribute to its solution whereby partners share resources, risks and rewards.” Principals interviewed tended to ascribe partnership status to long term or traditional donors who support a range of school needs and goals.

While an interviewee from the principal Jamaican private sector umbrella group expressed belief that financing education should not be the responsibility of the private sector, other private sector respondents indicated a positive environment for partnerships. The consensus is that the sector has been actively supporting education at all levels of the system. Individual respondents cited:

- Major contributions to infrastructure;
- New and recurrent scholarships to tertiary level students;
- Equipment, furniture and materials provision; and
- Sponsorship of mentoring programs.

Site visit interviews with principals and partners indicated a mixed assessment of the environment for partnerships. Most school visited reported a “strong” or “supportive” environment, but three principals described it as “difficult,” “competitive,” and “reluctant.” The reasons offered for the negative assessment relate to school locations, such as rural small farming communities, high volume school areas, and inner city communities.

It should be noted, however, that while corporate respondents described a positive environment for partnerships, they also expressed caution given:

- The current economic climate in Jamaica;
- Escalating costs of delivery of education at all levels;
- Limited and targeted funding availability;
- The various demands from all levels; and
- The difficulty of making allocation decisions.

Others recommended funding possibilities that do not entail heavy reliance on corporate support:

- Reorganizing and reallocating government funding;
- Establishing an education trust fund;
- Using the education tax for the purpose it was intended; and
- Educating parents to save for their children’s education from birth, for example, through insurance schemes.

In sum, though private sector partnerships can be helpful, it is unrealistic to think that they can fill major gaps in education financing.

### **School Level Partnerships**

Partnerships have had the greatest impact at the local level. Principals of EEH project schools have been empowered by their training in grant writing, research, and submission techniques aimed at equipping recipients with strategies to initiate partnerships. During site visits, praise of the training provided included: “it opened our minds to the possibilities,” and “it made us realize that partnership is not begging.”

Most EEH schools have more than one active private sector partnerships, ahead of the end-of-project goal stated in the EEH Semi-Annual Report June 2008, for each project school to have at least one active private sector partnership. Principals reported that partnerships are built upon relationships that come about through the school board, the principal, and the partner taking an active interest in the school. Partners interviewed on site visits described the start of their commitments variously as:

- Visiting the school, seeing the need and starting to help,
- Continuing a tradition of the company to assist the school, or
- Having partnering a school as a personal goal.

### **Expanding Partnerships**

School leaders recognize that attracting support from the private sector and other donor groups is a necessity to maintain the full scope of their work. Principals, board members and partners have suggested several requirements to accomplish this:

- The school should have a clear set of priorities.
- There should be collaboration among stakeholders.
- Donors should be included in school activities.
- Encouragement should be given to other companies to assist.
- Principals should improve their grant writing skills.
- There should be clear transparency and accountability.
- Schools should show appreciation to partners and donors.

### **Sustainability**

Out of two project sustainability tools introduced to schools, grant writing has been deemed the most successful both in its practicality and in the confidence the skill has engendered in principals. The second tool, the Parent Skills Bank, is intended to be a record of available skills and abilities among parents and to encourage principals to place a monetary value on goods and services parents provide. Principals interviewed did not report a Skills Bank, some stating that they already knew the skills their parents possess. In respect of the second objective, only one school of those visited had put a monetary value on goods and services supplied by parents. This activity requires specialized knowledge that the project might consider providing, through direct training or a ‘how to’ manual.

- *Is the institutional environment in the education sector conducive to the incorporation and expansion of successful EEH/NHP interventions to non-project schools? (Factors to be addressed include the current education transformation*

*process, political support for educational reform, educational policies, resources, and infrastructure and the roles being played by other donors.*

The team believes that the current environment in the education sector offers an excellent opportunity for USAID to incorporate and, thus, replicate EEH's core best practices – management, training, teaching and learning, and community-based involvement in and partnership with the schools – in national primary school systems.

This assessment is based on the existence of the ETP, which, as noted, is charged with implementing the recommendations of the 2004 Task Force on Educational Reform. The ETP, which survived the recent change of government intact, has started to implement a number of recommendations, even as it continues work on others.

The team's investigations have revealed that although major multilateral assistance to the ETP is in the works, there remains a great and until now unfilled need for TA, training, and other bi-lateral support for several key reforms. Included in these reforms are: policy and policy research support to the new MOE; assistance to the new, modernized and re-focused Regional Education Authorities to help them carry out their new function of providing school support services to the schools; and support for the modernizing and upgrading of teacher education and teacher in-service training. (See Suggestions Section for the team's recommendations in this regard.)

- *How well have the needs of different stakeholders been met (e.g., students, teachers, parents, and school boards)?*

EEH project interventions did not directly address the needs of school community stakeholders such as members of school boards, membership of Parent Teachers Associations, and parents. However, through their direct connections with the main players at the center of project initiatives, it is possible to identify indicators of EEH effectiveness.

### ***Partner Jamaica***

EEH project schools generally attract private sector support for operational inputs such as plant maintenance, some materials and resources provision, school feeding programs and student sponsorships. Core input costs are seen as the responsibility of government. The fact that schools need to seek supplementary financing is an indicator of government's inability to supply all of a school's budgetary requirements. Partner Jamaica is intended to support sustainability of EEH project initiatives by sourcing external funding. The creation of a second body focusing on Jamaican sources is reportedly under discussion.

### ***School Boards***

When asked what needs they had as school board members, some respondents focused on the infrastructure shortcomings of their schools. The majority, however, aligned their needs to school performance and development issues, some of which are to:

- Cater to the needs of the children;
- Help teachers to help children;

- Improve student performance;
- Improve attendance levels; and
- Support the professional development of teachers.

There were also school-wide concerns to:

- Create a collaborative and encouraging environment;
- Manage a successful school;
- Build the reputation of the school ; and
- Focus on the priority goals of the school.

Board members also included other school community stakeholders in their list of needs. They wished to foster cooperation between the school and the community, encourage parents to attend meetings, and for parents to become more involved in their children's education.

Board members acquired knowledge of EEH through a combination of principals' presentations at board meetings, dialogues with teachers, and classroom visits. Members added that this knowledge (a) helped their understanding of the literacy and numeracy needs of the children, (b) helped their understanding of their role as school managers, and (c) provided direction to the board. There is no clear link between the board's knowledge of EEH initiatives and the performance goals they identified. However, it is reasonable to conclude, given the reported satisfaction with the quality of teacher training and the overall gains in literacy and numeracy among students, that EEH has had an impact on the performance of school boards in terms of two of their goals.

### ***Parent Teacher Associations***

PTA respondents in EEH project schools visited expressed two main goals:

1. To keep parents informed so that they are better able to help their children learn.
2. To involve parents in the activities of the school.

Regular meetings are held once per term at most project schools. Principals and PTA members report that parents were sensitized about EEH interventions through discussions, sharing of teachers' workshop experiences, and from invited speakers who addressed issues such as gender awareness and gave parenting tips on how to help their children to learn. Most schools also reported grade meetings that saw higher levels of parent support. These consultations kept parents abreast of their children's learning strengths and performance needs.

The PTAs encourage classroom visits by parents and through such observations they understand better how to help their children in school. Parents reported assisting as teachers' aides, helping produce teaching aids, and at one school parents teach all classes on Teachers' Day. Parents, along with the PTA plan and carryout fund raising events, the proceeds of which are used to benefit the school.

Strong principals assist PTAs greatly through "encouraging more collaboration" and "interactivity," being "more inclusive," and instilling "self-confidence in children, teachers and parents." Such facilitative environments fostered by the principals allow school groups such as

the PTA to achieve their goals. Thus, EEH was effective in helping the PTA to inform parents about their children's education, and to involve parents in school activities.

### **Parents**

Under EEH parents are seen as co-managers of the school. In the collaborative environment supported by the project, parents are part of school development planning that includes goal setting and decision-making. In this capacity, they also undertake fund raising projects to fund operating and other needs of the school.

EEH has further increased parents' involvement in the schools through the previously mentioned Parent Skills Bank. Even though actual logs are rarely present, principals indicate using knowledge of parents' skills and abilities to attract parents' support in construction, plumbing, organizing, addressing groups, 4-H and cultural activities, among other activities.

EEH provides opportunities for parents to learn new skills. Three schools reported opening their computer labs for parents to learn information technology skills. At one school, twenty-five parents are given IT training four hours per week. Parents also reported learning from their children and through classroom observation how IT is used in teaching and learning.

EEH builds parents' knowledge of their role in their children's education. This is achieved through sensitization about EEH by principals and teachers, talks given at PTA meetings, grade level consultations, classroom observations, and when they assist their children's teachers or participate in school activities such as "Read Aloud."

Parents of children in schools in the inner city do not benefit from EEH to the same extent as other parents. Inner city schools report lower attendance at PTA and grade meetings, however three city principals mentioned other forms of impact on parents, namely; (a) parents have continued the breakfast program begun under NHP, (b) they are more open to communication and consultations, and (c) they no longer leave their children's report at the school office.

While strong parent support is evident in project schools, this is true only for a core group. The Jamaican parent body consists of many young persons who need to build their capacity to participate confidently in the roles the school expects them to fill. There is no question of the positive impact their active participation plays in the school, but there have been no structured training program to guide parents. The team, therefore, strongly suggests that parent training be part of any future activity.

### **Performance and Impact**

- *How does the evaluation team assess the performance and impact of EEH and what are its recommendations for activities to be included in USAID/Jamaica's new education strategy?*

The team has a positive opinion on EEH's performance overall but also some concerns about the project. The following bullets summarize its views in both respects:

## Successes

- There is substantial anecdotal evidence, especially that drawn from school site-visit observations and interviews with the project staff, that leads to the conclusion that learning results in literacy and numeracy have significantly improved on a project-wide basis, with the exception of a few problem schools.
- The successful graduation of selected schools based on project-developed criteria, is a positive achievement. This conclusion is discussed in greater detail under the heading of “Other Major Findings.” The fact that the graduation process has stimulated non-graduated schools to work harder to make improvements to achieve similar status is another positive finding.
- As a result of the graduation process, EEH schools are now reportedly perceived as being of higher quality than other public schools, with the result that they are increasingly sought out by parents who want to enroll their children in an EEH school.
- School management improvements, including School Improvement Plans (SIPs) and increased and more effective use of the Jamaica School Administration System (JSAS), were widely observed by the team and appear to be major successes, though there are variations among schools.
- Teaching methods were observed to have improved significantly and to generally meet prescribed standards.
- The widespread and effective use of instructional technology, while there are variations among the schools, is another major observed success.
- The project’s role in developing the fourth grade numeracy test (GAIN), leading to its adoption on a national scale, is an important success. JSAS is another example of a project (NHP) product on the verge of achieving a nation-wide impact. Because they have been or soon will be adopted for national replication, these two efforts were clearly cost-effective.
- Training was generally found to be widespread and continuing, and a major strength of the project. The creation of the corps of 17 “multifaceted” education specialists, financed by the GOJ, who regularly visit EEH schools and provide clinical supervision, has been another major element in assuring the success of the EEH schools.
- The community-based components of the project— school boards, PTAs, parents, and communities - were observed to be in place and working well in most schools.
- The development of local public-private partnerships (PPPs) to help support the schools was found to be a success in the majority of schools visited, with variations traceable to two factors: the quality and vigor of school leadership and whether a school is located in an area with a significant local economy.
- EEH best practices have attracted positive attention, both from neighboring schools and from the MOE, especially the ETT.
- The team’s observations have again demonstrated that the presence in a school of high quality, well-trained principals and resource teachers is the fundamental ingredient of success.

- The Team views the current, on-going, Educational Transformation process as offering the best hope for sustaining the project, through its influence on and incorporation into that process.

### Issues

- The training strategy, while successful, did not include any attempt to work with and give experience to non-project training providers. This will be a high priority area for work under the ETP.
  - Cascade training strategies, especially from project to non-project schools reportedly have had limited success.
  - The gender/boys education component of the project which received clear emphasis in planning and organizing stages of the project was found to be relatively weak.
  - While the project has invested significant resources in the least-performing schools, there are a few cases where even after 10 years the investments have produced little in the way of results. The team is not aware of any special strategies or adapted methods being employed by the project to address this situation.
  - While the team is persuaded that the reported improvements in learning results have indeed occurred, it had difficulty verifying that conclusion from the available assessment data, including the Performance Management Plan (PMP).
  - Comparisons of learning results between project and non-project schools, which are critical to assessing project results, appear not to have been made and reportedly were not part of the project design.
- *What development interventions should the MOE implement during the next strategy period? (Issues to be considered include: the Educational Transformation Project; the roles of civil society, private sector, NGOs, parents, and social workers; and the importance of social and civic values.)*

The team's advice to MOE is to proceed vigorously ahead with the ETP. It is expected that many if not most of the best practices of EEH will be adopted in the process. The community and partnership best practices are essentially unique in Jamaican public schools at the present time.

The team also recommends that the Ministry seek ways to involve civil society organizations and NGOs in the transformation process to the extent possible. It is anticipated that the policy research component of the proposed new project would offer opportunities to some of these organizations. Another potentially important area would be in supporting some of the many training needs which the implementation of ETP will entail.

Regarding the importance of social and civic values, the team could not agree more on the great need for the development of a strong initiative addressing attitude, behavioral, and socialization issues through means such as: new school curriculum modules, teacher training modules at both the pre-service and in-service levels, similar training modules for REA leaders, and school improvement teams including principals, parents, and school boards. If such an initiative remains to be completed when and if the proposed new activity begins, stimulating attention to this problem should be a high priority for the project's policy component.



- *What are the team's suggestions for employing lessons learned from the EEH project in support of the Government of Jamaica's Education transformation initiatives and also for rationalizing USAID/Jamaica's education activities?*

See the team's recommendations in Suggestions for USAID Education Program section.

## **Other Major Findings**

### ***Graduation Program***

One of EEH's significant successes has been the development and launching of a "graduation" program to recognize the achievements of the higher performing schools. A set of criteria was developed and the project's 71 schools were individually rated under those criteria.

In order to graduate, schools had to accumulate sufficient points on the identified criteria in three main areas:

Student performance in:

- Literacy and mathematics measured by:
  - a. The Grade 4 Literacy Test in 2005 and 2006 (5 points)
  - b. The Grade 3 Diagnostic test in mathematics, in 2005 and 2006 (5 points)

Effective Leadership Practices (10 + 1 points) as seen in five areas:

- The currency of the School Improvement Plans, and action plans; (3 points)
- Use of JSAS to store and retrieve data; (3 points)
- An active PTA; (2 points)
- An active School Board; (2 points)
- Ongoing partnerships with local/national/international agencies (1 point)

Effective Classroom Practices as seen in:

- The Use of Resources;
- Instructional Strategies;
- Data Driven Techniques (9 points)

Thirty nine schools have met the criteria and were recognized in graduation ceremonies in December 2007 and June 2008. Another cohort of schools is expected to graduate at the end of the year.

### ***Program Management Plan (PMP)***

Table 2 represents a team effort to present the Summary Performance Data from project start-up through academic year 2007/08 for project schools, excluding the NGO component. Some data from the 2007/08 school year has still not been reported since it has to be obtained from the MOE, which has not released it.

Table 2: PMP

RESULT	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR			ACADEMIC YEAR				
				2006	2007		2008	
Area	Indicator	Unit of Measure		Baseline	Target	Actual	Target	Actual
Program element	1. Number of administrators & officials trained with USG support	Individual	Male	27	-	23		28
			Female	114	-	67		129
			Total	141	161	90	100	157
Basic Education	2. Number of learners enrolled in USG supported primary schools	Individual	Male	16,108		Not available		
			Female	14,304				
			Total	30,412		26,087 <sup>6</sup>		
	3. Number of primary school teacher/educators trained with USG support	Individual	Male	64				
			Female	291				
Total	355	404	354					
4. Number of PTAs and/or similar "school" governance structures supported.	Organization	None	53	63	66	71		
SO12	6. % of Grade 4 students at or above Grade 4 level in Literacy	Percent	Male	41	46	48.2	49	
			Female	72	75	67.6	69	
			Total	55.8	59	57.6	59	
	7. % of Grade 4 students at or above Grade 4 level in Numeracy	Percent	Male			40	42	
			Female			52.2	54	
			Total	7		45.6	47	
9a. % of project schools that demonstrate at least four management best practices	Percent	None	31.8	50	50.7	55		
IR 1	10. Average grade 3 math scores	Average as percent of total score	Male	56.7	57	48.9	60	
			Female	62.5	63	56.06	65	
			Total	59.6	60	52.31 <sup>8</sup>	62	
	11. Average grade 3 Language	Average as a	Male	56	58		60	
Female			64.1	65		66		

<sup>6</sup> The project director reports: Please note the reduction in the number of learners in 2007. At the start of the project in 2006 the baseline of 30,412 represented students in grades 7 – 9 in 8 up-graded high schools that were part of the original project proposal. This was in addition to the students in the NGOs and the primary schools.

<sup>7</sup> There was no baseline reported.

<sup>8</sup> These results are for 48 schools.

	Arts scores	percent of total score	Total	60	62	<sup>9</sup>	64	
IR 3	13. Number of partnerships established	Number	Project Schools	39	43	165	48	
	14. US\$ amount leveraged by partnerships (PPP adjusted)	Number	Project Schools	250K	300K	539K	350K	

Indicator 2 reports on the number of learners enrolled in EEH primary schools. The original PMP was developed before USAID reduced the project budget, so that the original baseline target number included 12 NGOs and students in 8 schools that had grades 7 to 9. The number reported for 2007 is, according to the project director, the actual number of learners in EEH schools in grades 1 to 6.

Indicator 3 baseline includes the original NGO teacher/educators, as does the target for 2007. The actual number for 2007, 345, is the number of primary teacher/educators who received anywhere from one hour to as much as 65 hours of training.

With respect to Indicator 4, the team found that all the EEH schools, with the exception of the Bull Bay School, had active PTAs.

Indicator 5, “Number of textbooks and learning materials provided with USG assistance” was eliminated in agreement with USAID.

If the percentages reported in Indicator 6 are correct, it would appear that there has been little overall improvement in literacy. Furthermore, it seems that the performance of girls has dropped, while that of boys has improved. This could indicate that there has been some improvement in attention to gender issues in the schools. It might also mean that as a result of being encouraged to give special attention to boys teachers are giving less attention to girls. There could also be a problem with the data.

There is no baseline established for Indicator 7. The percentages reported as actual for the year 2007 might be considered as baseline, so that when the 2008 percentages are available, it can be determined if the target has been met. The team was told that these figures are not yet available.

Indicator 9a refers to the percentage of project schools that demonstrate at least four management best practices. There are seven best practice criteria in the document, “Basic Education PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT PLAN For Expanding Educational Horizons Ministry of Education and Youth, Jamaica”:

- Staff development (on-site training sessions held for teachers, regular planning and updates carried out);
- Use of Jamaican Schools Administrative System, to track student results;

<sup>9</sup> Not ready at this time.

- Engaged PTA (keep minutes of proceedings, has elected officers, holds regular meetings, etc; participates in projects/activities)
- School physical environment conducive to learning (access to and use of learning materials, desired classroom strategies and equipment (technology))
  - Programs in place to support and encourage student attendance to be at or above national average, etc.
  - School Improvement Plans prepared for current year and used to support literacy, numeracy, technology, etc.
  - School Board active (is constituted, meets regularly, participates in school activities)

However, in the October 29, 2007 report there are only four practices mentioned:

- An active PTA, and an active School Board (although the latter is sometimes not under the control of the school),
- A School Improvement Plan, with Action Plans which are updated yearly,
- Regular in-house staff development training and supporting other EEH training workshops (cluster and residential),
- The Jamaica Schools Administrative Software installed on at least one computer, and used by teachers to manage student performance and other matters.

The difference between the two sets of indicators apparently reflects a switch from the original indicators to the criteria used in the graduation program.

Indicators 10 and 11 report the average as a per cent of total scores on Grade 3 literacy and math tests that are administered annually. Although in its visits the team was told that these scores have improved significantly, a glance at the percentage numbers reported in the table do not reveal a “significant” improvement. In fact, although the actual score for 2007 reflects only 48 of the 71 schools, it shows a decline from the baseline in math. And the targets that have been set for both math and literacy do not seem to be “significantly” higher than the actuals, given the amount of training, clinical supervision, materials and technology that the project is investing. The absence of final results for both math and literacy for 2007 and 2008 for all project schools limits the team’s ability to reach a judgment on the significance of this finding.

In general, the team had difficulty explaining the apparent disparity between the lack of impressive learning achievement data and the clear improvements observed in classroom teaching, student enthusiasm and participation, and parent support in the home and the classroom. All of the other indicators show similar, positive and sustained progress.

As there have been no measures taken to compare student achievement in EEH schools with other schools, there is no information of that kind currently available to help resolve the question. There is an urgent need to make such comparisons, at least for the learning components of the project.

### ***Cost Effectiveness***

A considerable sum of money has been invested in EEH and its predecessor, NHP. There are two clear cases of success in developing best practices that have or appear likely to be accepted

by the MOE and incorporated into the national primary school system. They are the development and subsequent roll-out of the Grade 4 mathematics test and the development and expected roll-out of JSAS. These two activities, at least, must be judged cost-effective. However, until the learning results are better documented, the overall question of cost-effectiveness is difficult to address.

### **Formative Evaluation**

In addition to collecting and disseminating the PMP data, the project has conducted formative evaluations in a number of ways, such as: school visits; collecting JSAS data that go beyond that collected via the PMP, and feedback received during training programs. This information was processed and conveyed, among others, to project specialist, principals, and resource teachers to assist them in addressing any issues that the information might raise.

Apart from these internal formative evaluations, the school graduation process described above produced a wealth of new information on which schools were performing positively or negatively and on which of the project's main components. The EEH Graduation Criteria are being used as an additional tool for evaluating the performance of schools and enabling the project and school leaders to address specific weaknesses in individual schools. As a result of the graduation ratings, additional or more intensive prescriptive project activities have taken place, especially in non-graduating schools, which have been motivated to become graduates themselves.

According to the project director, the new data obtained from the graduation process will be incorporated in the 2007-2008 annual data report and continued thereafter. Included will be increases in training sessions, the number of teachers and administrators trained, the impact of training on instructional practice based on classroom observations, and special treatment/intervention in poor performing schools.

### **Summary of the Evaluation**

The Mission's objectives for the evaluation encompass three basic issues that were also the focus of the team's work: EEH's accomplishments; its impact to date; and whether and how can it be incorporated in the national primary education system and, thus, replicated.

The evaluators found that in all significant respects, EEH's school development work has been a major success. The team identified some areas of concern, which are addressed in its recommendations for EEH priorities between now and the end of the project in December 2009. These do not detract from the team's broad endorsement of what EEH has accomplished within the schools and the associated communities.

Regarding replication, the team concluded that the best way for USAID to obtain major returns from its 10-year investment in Jamaican primary school development is to partner with the MOE and other donors on appropriate components of the Education Transformation Project. (See Suggestions for USAID Strategy Section for the team's recommendations.)

## **EEH Priorities: October 2008 to December 2009**

The time remaining from the time of completion and delivery of the team's report and the end of the project will be approximately 14 months. During this period, the team recommends that the project focus on the following priority actions, most of which are intended to highlight the project and increase its chances of being accepted as a prime source of best practices and experience by the ETP. The proposed actions are:

- Seek ways to compare learning results in project and non-project schools. This is critical for establishing that EEH has been a success, particularly in improving learning results. At a minimum, the project schools' scores on the Grade 4 literacy and math tests should be compared with the average scores of all schools.
- Graduate more schools and accelerate weaning of graduated schools. The team understands that a third cohort of schools will be graduated at the end of the year. That would be a propitious moment to also officially wean the previously graduated schools, with appropriate congratulations and publicity.
- Commission an outside team to help review and document EEH best practices and, in selected cases, to prepare manuals on their implementation.
- Analyze and prepare recommendations for the MOE on effective (or less-effective) practices for raising the performance of low-performing schools.
- Make a renewed effort in the gender/boys education area to move beyond sensitization to development of an inventory of best practices in Jamaica and elsewhere and, if time and resources permit, the design and launching of at least one controlled pilot effort.
- Seek to work more closely with the ETT by offering assistance in numeracy, an area in which ETT has a real need. The diversion of some of EEH's skilled people to this effort could be an important contribution to the transformation project and to EEH's sustainability through replication.
- Launch the website and use it as a prime vehicle for disseminating project best practices and other information.

## **Program Management**

The EEH project contractor, Juarez Associates, Inc., generally has done a good job. With the exception of a few low-performing schools that have not responded well to the project, an excellent job has been done in taking EEH services and support to the project schools and communities. Significant improvements have been made in school management. Teaching and learning, as observed by the team, have been greatly improved. Furthermore, effective local participation through school boards, PTAs, parents, and local partnerships have been achieved.

There are three project areas in which the team has some concern. One is gender, with the sub-theme of education of boys, where the results have not lived up to expectations. The second relates to the lack of impact on the very low-performing schools, as well as the absence, so far as the team knows, of special efforts to turn the situation around. Finally, the project has yet to find a way to adequately compare the learning performance of project and non-project schools.

## **Suggestions for the USAID Education Program in the 2010-2014 Strategy Period**

The team believes that USAID's goals going forward should be to 1) partner with the MOE and the new authorities created under the ETP in the implementation of selected components of the ETP and 2) do so in a way that draws on the experience gained from the NHP, EEH, and CETT projects, as well as on USAID's extensive, global experience in educational development.

The components that the team recommends be given consideration are the REAs, the educational policy component of the re-structured MOE, and the training systems that will be needed to make the ETP a success.

The REAs are judged by the team to represent the single, best entry point for ensuring a strong, sustainable return on USAID's 10 year investment in EEH/NHP. They are going to need proven, reliable models on which to base their services to the schools. Their professional staff, from the top down, will need training or re-training to make a successful conversion from the old-style inspectorate-type organizations that existed before the reforms and service and developmental kind of institutions envisaged. Finally, the long-run sustainability of the 71 EEH/NHP schools depends on receiving the kind of continuing clinical support that, under the reform plan, is to be provided by the REAs.

Assisting the new MOE with its on-going policy formulation responsibilities would make a large contribution to underpinning and sustaining the ETP and, thus, help provide a strong, supportive environment for USAID's proposed work with other ETP components.

Finally, if the ETP is to succeed, it must include a strong, flexible training component. At a minimum, a capacity to train and/or re-train in-service teachers, principals, school boards, parents, and a wide range of education professionals must be created. Creating it will likely require recourse to a range of sources, including: projects like EEH (especially EEH graduates), PESP, and CETT; government; the pre-service teacher training institutions; NGOs; and the private sector. Efforts to institutionalize these training resources to provide long-term support to the sector should be included in the training plan.

The Team proposes the development of a single, three or four-year project to provide assistance in at least these two areas. At the core of the project would be:

- Technical assistance to assist the ETT, and the new REAs as they come on stream, to conceptualize and plan the REAs' new responsibilities, especially school improvement responsibilities, including goals, priorities, staffing, staff training, systems to provide a wide range of school improvement practices (targeting both the schools and communities), and evaluation and feedback tools.
- Training and support to REA leaders and school improvement teams as they build capacity and gain experience in performing their new functions.
- Policy support, including TA, training, and research grants to the new MOE in priority areas, not necessarily limited to those related to the REAs.

Illustrative examples of activities that might be carried out under the policy component include:

- Policy research on best practices in Jamaica and elsewhere aimed at addressing behavioral and social obstacles to learning and increasing student self-esteem and motivation. (This effort would be of particular interest to the proposed USAID project's work with the REAs, schools, and communities).
- Research on education finance issues, including but not limited to, the education tax and reduction or elimination of limits on the deductibility of personal and private sector contributions to education. (A finance shortage would be a major threat to the sustainability of the proposed USAID regional and local education support activities).
- Exploration of the possibility of using a voucher system to permit Jamaican teachers who are in line for in-service training to select the training provider(s) of their choice. Such a system would likely have a positive effect on the number and quality of providers available for outsourcing training.
- Policy-related conferences to expose Jamaican educators and leaders to state of the art practices in other countries. Further cooperation with PREAL beyond the accountability conference scheduled to be held in Jamaica in October would be one way of proceeding.
- There is urgent need to empirically assess the gender situation in Jamaican primary schools and suggest a menu of strategies to address the gaps in boys' performance.

The team believes strongly that the proposed ETP activity should be the centerpiece of USAID's education strategy. If resources are tight, it is recommended, though not without regret, that the NGO project be phased out, rather than providing sub-optimal funding for supporting the ETP.

## Conclusions and Recommendations

The Aguirre/JBS International team has concluded that EEH has been a significant success, particularly in its school improvement work with 71 Jamaican primary schools.

*Recommendation 1: That EEH continue to perform its work through the project's end in December 2009.*

The team believes that the best use of the remaining time for the project is to focus on improvements which will strengthen the case for adoption of EEH best practices in the national primary school system.

*Recommendation 2: That EEH in the remaining time available:*

- Seek ways to compare learning results in project and non-project schools. This is critical for establishing that EEH has been a success in this critical area. At a minimum, the project schools' scores on the Grade 4 literacy and math tests should be compared with the average scores of all schools.
- Graduate more schools and accelerate weaning of graduated schools. The team understands that a third cohort of schools will be graduated at the end of the year. That would be a propitious moment to also officially wean the previously graduated schools, with appropriate congratulations and publicity.
- Commission an outside team to help review and document EEH best practices and, in selected cases, to prepare manuals on their implementation.



- Analyze and prepare recommendations for the MOE on effective practices for improving the performance of low-performing schools.
- Make a renewed effort in the gender/boys education area to move beyond sensitization to development of an inventory of best practices in Jamaica and elsewhere and, if time and resources permit, the design and launching of at least one controlled pilot effort.
- Seek to work more closely with the ETT by offering assistance in numeracy, an area in which ETT has a real need. The diversion of some of EEH's skilled people to this effort could be an important contribution to the transformation project and to EEH's sustainability through replication.
- Launch the website and use it as a prime vehicle for disseminating project best practices and other information.

The team has concluded that the best way for USAID to obtain major returns from its 10-year investment in Jamaican primary school development is to partner with the MOE and other education authorities within the structure of the ETP on selected components of the project. The two top priority areas are: Assisting the REAs to effectively execute their new responsibilities for school improvement support and assisting the MOE in meeting its expanded policy formulation responsibilities.

*Recommendation 3: That USAID enter into discussions with the MOE regarding the establishment of a partnership with the Ministry for assisting the ETP, under which USAID would concentrate its assistance on the two ETP components described above.*

The team has concluded, finally, that the third highest priority, if resources permit, would be for USAID to assist with conceptualizing and planning the training components of the ETP and helping implement selected portions of the resulting plan.

*Recommendation 4: That USAID discuss with the MOE the commissioning of a study of ETP training needs and options for meeting them. Depending on the results of that study, consideration should be given by USAID to helping implement selected recommendations.*

The team is convinced that if USAID/Jamaica implements the above recommendations, it will achieve two key, strategic objectives. The first is to replicate the essentials of the EEH and related components of CETT/Jamaica on a nation-wide scale, as integral parts of the Education Transformation Project. The second is to focus the Mission's education strategy for FY 2010-2014 on a sustained program to support national education transformation efforts, in selected areas, thus encompassing but also transcending the earlier pilot efforts.

## **ANNEX 1: Education Transformation Project**

### **Ministry of Education Education Transformation Project**

The Education Transformation Team has six (6) main work-streams. These are:

1. Modernization of the Ministry
2. Schools facilities and Infrastructure
3. Curriculum Teaching and Learning
4. Behaviour and Communities
5. School Leadership and Management
6. Communication and Stakeholder Relations

#### **Ministry Modernisation**

The responsibility of this work stream is to create a governance framework that is fit for and consequently able to sustain a 21<sup>st</sup> Century education system. The modernised system will be guided by a significantly smaller central Ministry that will focus on proactive policy making and the development of strategy.

#### Administrative structures

Modernising the structures of education in Jamaica is essential for the sustainability of education reform. A modernised system will enable a stronger focus on school improvement and on raising standards. It will also ensure greater accountability in the system. Based on the Task Force Report, modernisation of the MoE focuses on three main areas:

- Focusing the central Ministry on policy and strategy and away from operational matters;
  - Creating new Regional Educational Authorities (REAs) with greater autonomy and a much stronger focus on improving schools;
  - Creating three new Agencies to focus on three of the main drivers of transformation: improving quality; curriculum and assessment; and transforming the teaching profession.
- The new agencies will be:
- The National Education Inspectorate
  - The Curriculum and Assessment Agency
  - The Jamaica Teaching Council

A team of international consultants, PA International, working in partnership with consultants in Jamaica, undertook a diagnostic review of modernisation issues in 2006. This team has been engaged to undertake Phase 1 of implementation for a period of six months. Phase 1 is currently in progress. The focus of this phase is to clarify the roles and staffing structures of the new bodies, to produce schemes of management for them, and to initiate the selection and recruitment process. Phase 1 will also include a review of the Jamaica Foundation for Lifelong Learning (JFLL).

Phase 2, lasting two years, will consist of detailed implementation, including the roll out of appointments, a comprehensive training programme, and support to embed changes. The contracting process for Phase 2 is the responsibility of the Public Sector Reform Unit in the Cabinet Office. The funding is grant aid and is currently provided by CIDA and DFID.

Modernisation will also seek to make improvements in other Agencies of the Ministry that support the nation's education and youth programmes.

### Infrastructure and ICT

Two other main areas of modernisation activity are:

- The improvement of the physical facilities of the Ministry, including regional offices, in line with Task Force recommendations.
- The development of a modern Information and Communications Technology infrastructure, including hardware, that is appropriate for the transformed system.

Significant progress has been made in both these areas. A team of ICT consultants from Chile have led the strategic planning process and a report has been submitted.

### **Schools Facilities and Infrastructure**

Improving school infrastructure and facilities is critical to education transformation. In order to create a world-class system and to ensure access and equity for all, it is essential that there are enough school spaces and a high quality learning environment for all students.

#### Current activity

The Schools Facilities and Infrastructure work stream is currently focusing on the immediate demand for additional school spaces. This is done through the expansion of existing structures and the construction of new schools. The work stream also presides over the provision of furnishing and equipment for schools. Currently, several projects are at various stages of start up and completion. 4835 spaces have already been provided at a cost of \$241 million.

In addition:

- Approximately 19,000 spaces will be provided through 11 new schools, 18 expanded and upgraded schools, and 28 prototype schools.
- Contracts for ongoing critical repairs to 300 schools have been issued and a further 300 are planned.
- Procurement of furniture and equipment has progressed well, with 217,000 units already delivered.
- A preventative maintenance programme for all schools will be introduced.

Stakeholder involvement at the local/community level is regarded as a priority.

The country's school system has not escaped the impact of the passage of Hurricane Dean. Approximately 490 schools will require repairs which are estimated to cost \$700 million.

### Strategic priorities

At a strategic level the work stream is planning for future needs and in particular:

- The further expansion of the system to improve access
- The rationalisation of All Age and Primary and Junior High School provision
- The elimination of the Shift System
- The reduction of class sizes across the system

Eleven schools were taken off the shift system in September 2007 and plans are at an advanced stage to reclassify 88 Primary and Junior High and All Age schools. Two space rationalisation studies and a facilities audit to underpin the strategic planning in this area have been completed and implementation and longer term project planning have begun. A strategic planner is currently being recruited to take forward this agenda.

The workstream is currently collaborating with E-Learning to prepare the physical infrastructure to accommodate IT infrastructure in secondary schools.

### **Schools Leadership and Management**

Good school leadership and management are the major factors in creating effective schools. Improving leadership through training, delegation of responsibility, and greater accountability are high priorities. The work stream's activities address these issues.

### Principals training

School principals require special skills and competencies to perform effectively within a transformed education system. Primary school principals have received training from Mt. St. Vincent University in Canada, a programme now taken over by St. Joseph's College, and the secondary programme is being delivered by the University of West Indies (UWI). Feedback from both programmes has been very positive. Future training needs are being analysed to improve upon existing training, to prepare aspiring school leaders and to reflect the changes that modernisation will bring.

### Performance management

An effective performance management framework is an essential component of education transformation. New appraisal instruments for principals and guidance counsellors have been piloted in Regions 4 and 5 and are being rolled out to all regions in this school year. The teacher evaluation instrument and system are being reviewed.

School review will be a priority of the transformed education system. The REAs will have a stronger focus on school improvement, and the new Inspectorate will take a more rigorous approach to school review and inspection and to the follow up from inspection findings.

### Improving data

A prominent feature of the new arrangements will be self-evaluation by schools. This will require new and improved data mechanisms, the development of better quality data and training for officers and school managers.

A team is developing better data on school and student performance including trend, benchmarking and value-added data and the development of school profiles. This will enable school managers to plan and evaluate their work better and to set targets for improvement. The data will be used by REAs for monitoring schools and by the new Inspectorate. The team completed the first part of their work in November 2007.

### A graduate teaching profession

The revolving loan scheme, to enable teachers to upgrade their professional education and attain graduate status, was launched in May 2007. The Teachers Colleges are collaborating to upgrade initial teacher training provision to Bachelor of Education standard.

### Greater school autonomy

The Task Force recommended greater autonomy for schools. Models for greater school autonomy are being developed as part of the Ministry's modernisation, particularly in relation to the responsibilities of the new REAs. A task group has undertaken initial scoping work on defining a model of delegated responsibility that is appropriate to the Jamaican context.

### Special education

The school management work stream is also addressing issues relating to students with special educational needs. A revised special education policy was developed in the Ministry and a research study on special educational needs in Region 6 was undertaken by UWI. These provide the basis for newly appointed special education experts to:

- Complete an audit of special educational needs;
- Develop an early identification, referral and placement system;
- Identify the human resource needs to manage and deliver provision;
- Improve the use of technology to support special education;
- Revise and develop teacher training syllabi in special education; and
- Develop a training programme.

## **Curriculum, Teaching and Learning**

The Curriculum, Teaching and Learning work stream addresses those issues that are at the very heart of education transformation. The main focus in this area is on literacy. Plans are also being developed to address concerns relating to numeracy.

### Literacy

A strategic framework has been created to ensure that reforms are sustained, that resources are targeted effectively, and that improvements are achieved in all schools. A regional literacy structure has been developed, achievement targets set at a national, regional and school level and a series of targeted interventions initiated to raise standards in those schools with the lowest levels of attainment.

A National Literacy Coordinator and a team of regional coordinators have been appointed to provide sustainable approaches to reading and to ensure that there are improvements in literacy levels. The national coordinator provides strategic oversight and drives the programme to achieve its targets. Shorter term targets for improvement at a regional and national level are being developed for schools. The curriculum based Literacy 1-2-3 programme is being rolled across 800 primary schools from September.

School based literacy coordinators and cluster based literacy specialists will ensure that improvements are implemented in all schools and will undertake diagnostic, monitoring and evaluation functions relating to learning and teaching. Specific interventions are being targeted at schools, particularly where achievement is lowest. These measures include:

- A review of the literacy provision at the primary and secondary levels has been undertaken as part of efforts to support students who experience difficulties in reading.
- A team of 50 literacy specialists has been recruited to support targeted schools on a regional basis.
- A system of improvement targets for literacy achievement, at a school, regional and national level has been developed.
- The Caribbean Centre of Excellence for Teacher Training (CETT) focuses on improving reading achievement in the poorest performing schools. It operates through the network of Teachers Colleges.
- Previous interventions such as the Inner City Reading Programme and the Competency Shelters have been re-evaluated and are being strengthened through teachers' workshops and greater monitoring.
- Collaboration is taking place with the Joint Board of Teacher Education to sustain improvement in literacy levels across all levels of the school system.

### Numeracy

The literacy programme will be followed by a National Numeracy Strategy. The numeracy team has begun its work and a revised draft policy has been developed. The numeracy strategy will be supported by the Centre for Mathematics and Science Education at the University of the West Indies.

Specific initiatives relating to this partnership will include islandwide workshops aimed at increasing the mathematics subject knowledge of primary school teachers. Research projects aimed at identifying the causes of underperformance in mathematics will also be undertaken.

A National Numeracy coordinator has been engaged and soon there will be Regional Coordinators, following the structure established for literacy.

### Secondary

The secondary curriculum and performance team is revising the secondary curriculum and providing targeted support to underperforming schools. The CXC syllabi have been “curricularised” to support teachers in preparing students for CXC in nine subject areas.

A pilot of the curriculum will begin in 60 high schools this year. English and mathematics are being prioritised and targets for improved achievement are being set at a regional level. In time targets will be cascaded to individual schools.

### ICT

Work in this area encompasses the activities of the ICT in Education Committee, and the programme of E-Learning Jamaica (E-LJam) Limited. The ICT in Education Committee’s activities have focused on:

- Drafting a national ICT in Education Policy which will shortly be submitted to Cabinet.
- Development of Strategic Plan for ICT in Education.
- Development of an inventory of technology in the nation’s schools, and a database of technology projects.

E-LJam focuses on Teacher’s Colleges and Secondary Schools and is conducting a pilot of ICT in education in 28 schools and three Teachers Colleges.

### **Behaviour Change and Community**

This work stream is addressing the difficult issues associated with improving behaviour. The strategic approach adopted has been to seek the involvement of communities and to ensure that there is a whole school approach to these matters. Among the initiatives being developed are:

- Home school agreements to strengthen the partnerships between home and school in order to improve behaviour, attendance and educational performance.
- Citizenship education to promote positive attitudes and core values such as patriotism, respect and volunteerism.
- Mentoring and peer counseling programmes, based on disseminating the best practice in Jamaican schools to those schools where the need is greatest.
- Interventions designed to support parents in helping students with behaviour difficulties
- A programme of community meetings, supported by the Social Development Commission to build support among communities for addressing behaviour issues.

- Behaviour management training being included in both initial training and continuous professional development programmes.
- Developing school safety and security guidelines for all schools.
- Targeted interventions in schools needing support.

A coordinator and six trainers have been employed for the Citizenship Education Programme. This programme has begun in 120 primary and secondary schools, primarily in Regions 1 and 6 and will be rolled out in all schools in the next school year.

The interventions being planned by the Behaviour Change and Community workstream include the introduction of a behaviour modification course for teachers, some of whom have expressed discomfort dealing with students who display unacceptable behaviour. The Mico Care Centre and the Jamaica Teachers Association are involved in the development of this programme. Workshops aimed at equipping parents with skills to manage behaviour will also be conducted.

These engagements will also seek to strengthen the networking capabilities of the National Parent Teachers Association and local Parent Teachers Association. Efforts are also being made by the workstream to re-energise uniformed and service groups in all schools. Schools will also be encouraged in their efforts to strengthen and or introduce a variety of co-curricular activities.

The workstream is coordinating good practice from a range of activities being undertaken by multi-agency groups including the Safe Schools Project and initiatives by the National Youth Service.

### **Communications and Stakeholder Participation**

Engaging all stakeholders and ensuring that there is full commitment is fundamental to the success of the transformation process. As a result this work stream has employed a blend of communications strategies and channels. This blend comprises the use of radio and print advertising and face to face meetings with a variety of stakeholders.

The programme for a sustained public education campaign and to engage education stakeholders has included a number of activities:

- The Communications Directorate has been expanded and refocused to address the important challenges as transformation progresses.
- A leading communications firm has been engaged to design and execute a sustained marketing programme.
- Island-wide update sessions with principals have been held. Similar meeting were held with staff in all regions, and with a wide range of stakeholder groups to share and discuss the Ministry modernisation proposals.
- The National Parent Teachers Association (NPTA) was launched in July 2006. It has proved to be a significant success and has already led to greater involvement by parents at every level.
- A National School Board Association (NSBA) has been formed to help raise awareness of, and regard for the governance responsibility of School Boards. This association will



provide a forum for School Boards to advocate, share best practices, and contribute to school improvement.

- Regional Forums have been created to enable a wide range of stakeholders in each region to have the opportunity to receive information about transformation and to contribute to the transformation process.
- A programme of community meetings to discuss aspects of transformation with members of the public has begun.

## **ANNEX 2: Teacher Education and Training**

### Initiatives and Major Players: Teacher Education and Training

Several agencies and institutions emphasize the importance of teacher education to the development of education in Jamaica. These include the Jamaica Teaching Council (JTC), The Joint Board of Teacher Education (JBTE) and The Consortium of Institutions for Teacher Education (CITE). These are the Major conduits for improvement of primary teacher education in Jamaica.

#### Jamaica Teaching Council

The newly established Jamaica Teaching Council (started October 1, 2008) is one of five agencies being established under the Education Transformation Efforts in Jamaica. The Council has responsibility for the enhancement and maintenance of professional standards in teaching, and the professional status of teachers. The stated principal functions will be the development of the registration and licensing standards and the accreditation of teacher certification.

While the JTC is only just refining its mandates, its perceived role is that of the nexus of teacher professional development in Jamaica, collaborating with the teachers colleges through CITE, the Joint Board of Teacher Education, and the School of Education at the University of the West Indies.

The director of the JTC indicates that in-service activities will be channeled through *Quality Education Circles*, divided among 58 groups of Jamaican schools based on their geographic location. These schools will include all levels of schools in the area (primary to tertiary). The idea is to have a central institution in each circle at all levels of education to promote peer group support. There will be a Circle Leader who might be the Principal or Vice Principal in place for one year. The circles will facilitate licensing procedure. The Regional Education Authorities will have oversight of the circles. Inspectors (from the Inspectorate) will inspect the schools. JTC sets standards for teaching gets a roster of competent teacher trainers to work in the system based on the needs.

In terms of the pre-service and in-service connection, the JTC promotes a model where there is a continuation of training where alumni are linked to their teacher education institution. When teachers college alumni meet, the council will engage in in-service training. There needs to be sufficient attention to sustainability.

The activities of the JTC are in a very early stage of development and procedures or activities are not fully conceptualized. However, as the government agency entrusted with teaching quality, this is a logical entry point for USAID discussions.

#### The Joint Board of Teacher Education

The Joint Board of Teacher Education, a statutory body, has been responsible for quality assurance in pre-service teacher education since 1965. During its existence the JBTE has worked closely with Ministries of Education, professional associations, colleges training teachers in the

Bahamas, Belize and Jamaica (with roles now expanded to the Cayman and Turks and Caicos Islands). The JBTE has also worked with international agencies and non-governmental organisations engaged in development cooperation in education.

The professional development work of the JBTE is supported by the Institute of Education (IOE) of the University of the West Indies, whose major responsibility is to support the work of the JBTE through research and development activities that include curriculum, instructional and other support materials, staff and institutional development initiatives in support of the work of the institutions engaged in teacher preparation in the Western Caribbean. The IOE is staffed by 14 experienced professional teacher educators, ten of whom hold PhD degrees in education. The IOE is also mainly responsible for the UWI's Master of Education in Teacher Education designed to meet the needs of colleges engaged in teacher preparation.

The capacity of the JBTE to offer leadership in teacher education in the region is also enhanced by its relationship with the teachers colleges in Jamaica.

In the past the JBTE has engaged in:

- Education Research
- Teacher education curriculum development
- Policy analysis and recommendations
- Certifying teachers from the colleges (relevant to the diploma programs)
- Managing teacher education projects
- Promoting teacher educators' professional development through conferences, workshops and the provision of graduate programmes.
- Publishing textbooks, handbooks, and course modules to support the teachers' college curricula and school curricula.

The Jamaica Teaching Council views the JBTE as an important partner in fulfilling their mandates as “ they are at the crux of teacher training in Jamaica, they set and maintain standards to ensure that teacher training is of the highest quality.” The JTC intends to depend on JBTE to accredit courses for teacher professional development.

#### The Consortium of Institutions for Teacher Education

CITE emerged out of the recommendations of the Education Task Force Report which highlighted the need for better qualified teachers in the Jamaican Education System. Currently, ten teacher training institutions across Jamaica have formed this alliance to offer teacher training at the bachelor's degree level. While it is the intention of these colleges to offer a four-year degree program, the current cohorts in CITE are drawn from the pool of three-year diploma graduates. Therefore, the award of the Bachelors Degree is an add-on for diploma qualified teachers. Eventually, colleges will embark on a total four-year programme. However, the JBTE has been invited to perform selected quality assurance functions in the CITE.

The following is the stated vision of CITE<sup>10</sup>

Currently Teacher Training Institutions offer degree programmes awarded by the University Council of Jamaica (UCJ), the University of the West Indies (UWI) or in partnership with other universities abroad. The Consortium will provide a fourth option - strengthening and sharing among a consortium. World wide there is a growing trend for Tertiary institutions to form consortia for economic and administrative reasons.

The Consortium is envisaged as:

- Enhancing and improving the capacity and capability of colleges to respond in a more timely and efficient manner to developmental challenges within teacher education. The current arrangements utilized for the award of degrees do not allow for timely responses to emerging challenges;
- Articulating the Diploma and Degree programmes, providing relevance and easy progression through the profession. For e.g. it will ensure that there is little or no duplication of courses/course content between the Diploma and the Degree programmes thereby guaranteeing maximum and optimal utilization of time and resources;
- Providing a common framework through which to continue offering teacher education programmes. This aspect of Teacher Education programme has resulted in Jamaica being the leader in the delivery of teacher education programmes in the Caribbean and high levels of international acceptance of our college graduates. **The Degree programme would seek to retain this successful practice and avoid the fragmentation, inconsistencies and dysfunctional arrangements that could arise were the Degree programme to be offered under different academic and professional jurisdiction;**
- Providing for the pre-service teacher modalities of training that facilitate their accessing training in a reasonable and meaningful way;
- Creating opportunities to engage in cooperative purchasing and resources sharing units within a whole;
- Finally, allowing for colleges to offer university level programmes while maintaining the opportunities and training qualities of a small college structure and ethos.

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<sup>10</sup> St. Joseph's Teachers' College. *B.Ed. in Primary and Early Childhood Education*. Available from <http://www.sjtc-ja.com/BEdCite.htm#vision>

Graduate School of Education (GSE) University of the West Indies

The hub of education research Jamaica resides in the School of Education at the University of the West Indies. This school is currently being transformed from into a graduate school of education. Again, the directorship for the GSE commenced in September 2008.

Project Possibilities

The wave of transformation activities in Jamaica makes the current teacher education milieu a prime candidate for intervention. While this sector is on the threshold of change, very little has been done in terms of bringing coherence to the collaborative links of the different agencies highlighted above. There are possibilities that can be explored for the next USAID strategy period. These include:

- Work with the JTC to establish the quality education circles through organizational and material support;
- Engage in an initiative to bring coherence to the partnerships between the agencies responsible for teacher education; and
- Create a coherent model for in-service and pre-service training activities.

## **ANNEX 3: Individual Team Reports**

### EXPANDING EDUCATIONAL HORIZONS EVALUATION Instructional Systems/Educational Materials Specialists (ISEMS) Report Clement Lambert

#### Effectiveness of Interventions and Approaches

Generally, the EEH interventions received favorable reviews from the respondents. Among those receiving the highest praise were the training and the technology infusion in schools.

#### Training

The EEH approach to training assumed multiple approaches. Training activities included national, cluster, school-based workshops as well as on site activities including coaching, demonstration teaching and clinical supervision.

National Residential Workshops are reportedly held on an annual basis. These workshops provide professional development activities for principals, resource teachers and other invited partners. The workshops promote sharing of strategies and reaffirmation of commitment to the project and the MOE these workshops are usually three to five days in duration.

Cluster workshops are held in among schools according to their proximity to each other. These workshops are conducted in selected intervention areas and can be either residential or non-residential.

School based workshops are in school training sessions conducted either by education specialists or resource teachers. These workshops generally involve the entire staff of a school and addresses areas identified for special attention at a particular school or to share information and strategies from national and cluster workshops.

School visits and demonstration occur on a regular basis especially in non graduated schools. Regular visits are a conducted by the education specialists who engage in a variety of activities including, classroom observations and feedback, demonstration teaching and also interaction and feedback with school administration. In addition, PIU staff including the chief of party engage in school visits to conduct training, monitoring or provide motivation to the leadership and staff.

#### Participant Feedback on Training

EEH Training activities received high commendation from participants. Principals highlighted the value of their training experiences in terms of boosting their morale to providing guidance on educational and instructional leadership as well as garnering public private partnership support. They found the workshops particularly invigorating since they were given time for collegial sharing and motivational sessions. In addition, they gained insight into the training of their resource teachers in literacy, numeracy, technology and gender. Resource teachers were equally complimentary of the training offered by EEH. They benefitted from collegial sharing at national

and cluster workshops as well as receiving pedagogical guidance from ‘experts’ in the various disciplines.

### Training Concerns

Despite the reports of participant satisfaction with the EEH training, there are some concerns that have surfaced from the documentation on training as well as participant feedback. These include the absence of:

- an articulated guiding philosophy and strategy underpinning the training activities training indicators,
- formal training evaluation and feedback,
- pre-service teacher education sector involvement,
- tangible incentives for resource teachers who participate in training and lack of formalized ties to relevant sections of the Ministry of Education and other primary education projects, and
- An overall project training plan.

It was the consensus of participants that pre-service teacher engagement is an essential.

### Recommendations for Training

The consultants recommend the following to promote partnerships in the training:

1. Create a protocol for interaction with education officers in the Core Curriculum unit as well as in the Regions.
2. Produce a training plan that provides guidance on EEH principles and the modus operandi for training.
3. Work at immediately addressing an incentive system for resource teachers through certification, and articulation with selected Jamaican institutions.

### Literacy

There are several literacy initiatives operating concurrently on the Jamaican primary education landscape. The major players are currently, Education Transformation led by a National Literacy Coordinator, Literacy 1-2-3, EEH and the Caribbean CETT. There are no formalized relationships among these project concerning how they should work together and their areas of focus. For example, while EEH and C-CETT are two USAID funded projects, there has been very little collaboration and consultation between both projects and EEH personnel were unable to provide any insights on the CETT project. In addition, there seems to be the perception of tension and rivalry between the various projects.

Our examination revealed that there should be little conflict between EEH and Literacy 1-2-3. While Literacy 1-2-3 focuses on creating local culture sensitive materials for use in grades one to three of the Jamaican primary school system. Teachers have reported that the EEH literacy intervention has better prepared them to handle the materials produced by literacy 1-2-3. The use of the big books as well as the language experience and awareness approach is generally viewed as endorsement of some of the strategies covered under EEH training.

In terms of Education Transformation, literacy is seen as a concern spanning early childhood to secondary levels. While the ETT portends to be geared at improving literacy nationally, it has assumed a "projectized" approach to concentrate on low performing schools in the various regions and clusters through the efforts of regional and cluster literacy coordinators. However, it is the purview of the ETT's curriculum work stream to implement measures to improve literacy and numeracy performance nationally. In light of the ETT's responsibility and their relative inexperience as a unit, EEH is strategically poised to establish formal relations with the ETT and concentrate on providing support for training or other areas where it has demonstrated relative strengths.

There is a haphazard distribution of literacy projects in the Jamaican literacy landscape. Projects have been accused of territorialism and unwarranted competition for national legitimacy. The role of the Education Transformation team is viewed as one that should attend to the consolidation of the various projects and partners for harmonious relationships that promote literacy improvement in Jamaica. After over a year in operation the literacy arm of the ETT has not established any formalized linkages with these projects. This is an area that deserves immediate attention so that literacy development resources are consolidated and configured to maximize the benefits to the Jamaican children. This requires consultation and written agreement to the roles of different projects in the Jamaica education system. Undoubtedly, there is room for all existing projects. However, to avoid overlap and rivalry there should be a clear definition of the roles of each literacy project.

### Numeracy

There have been very few numeracy interventions in Jamaican primary schools. EEH efforts to improve children's numeracy competencies over the past two years are far superior to other national schemes. There is little doubt that the numeracy performance has improved in EEH schools. However, this level of improvement is difficult to measure since the grade four numeracy test (GAIN) is new. Therefore, there is very little room for comparison of scores. There is also the need to compare EEH performance on the GAIN with non project schools. However, this was deemed unfeasible in the recent sitting since there were discrepancies in the scoring of the test.

One notable achievement in the EEH numeracy efforts is the Adoption of the GAIN by the MOE. The GAIN is seen as a flagship achievement of the numeracy component of the project. There is the need to develop an item bank for the GAIN test and the MOE has committed to the development of this bank. Perhaps, the GAIN test has been the chief focus of collaboration with the education partners. There has been consultation (to different degrees) with the Student Assessment Unit, the Mathematics section, the Education Transformation Team and central Ministry in the development and adoption of this measure as a national tool.

While there is a national numeracy policy<sup>11</sup>, Jamaica lacks a national consensus on the path to improve numeracy in our schools. While EEH embraces the use of technology in promoting numeracy acquisition, the Education Transformation Team advocates the use of less technology

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<sup>11</sup>Ministry of Education, Youth and Culture. *Mathematics and Numeracy Policy*, May 2003. Available from <http://moeyc.gov.jm/policies/numeracypolicy.pdf>



and more simple tools and manipulatives to promote mathematical competencies. This ETT perception is not closely aligned with the national numeracy policy since there are several references to the importance of technology in promoting numeracy.

### Technology

To describe technology as an intervention does not present a true picture of the role and configuration of the intervention. The PIU team as well as the project partners have explicitly recognized that the technology intervention supports the development of literacy and numeracy. A major activity in the project is to “encourage full utilization of technology tools to enhance literacy and numeracy.” However, since there have been significant investments in the technological dimension during the life of EEH as well as the training of technology resource teachers examination of this intervention is necessary.

Support for technology spans materials acquired during the life of the EEH project and also during the life of its predecessor NHP. EEH school respondents have generally not been able to separate technological infusions between the two projects. Participants itemize gadgets received since the inception of NHP as a part of the project infusion. It is noteworthy that the EEH technology team continues to provide support for the use of the devices acquired over the life of both projects. In our visits there were basically two types of EEH schools in terms of technology. One classification of schools embraced technology and used the devices as enhancements to learning –most teachers were on board and the major complaint was that there were not enough devices to meet the instructional needs of the school. In the second grouping of schools technological concerns revolved around the resource teacher.

The issue of sustainability surfaced during the exploration of the technology component of EEH. Schools tended to be heavily dependent of the project for supplying, maintaining and replenishing their technology stock. Of particular concern was the level of dependence on the project for even small items. One school (outfitted with an entire computer lab) expressed the concern that they did not receive a digital camera promised by the project. This suggests reluctance on these participants to seek innovative ways of acquiring technological aids to support those supplied by the project.

Of concern is also the conversation with the National Numeracy coordinator for the ETT. Her views were diametrically opposed to the EEH practices of computers as aids to learning. Since the ETT has the responsibility of consolidating initiatives, it is important that consensus is arrived at on the use of technology in promoting learning in Jamaican Primary schools.

During the project evaluation school visits the consultants saw technology in action in selected classrooms. There is no doubt that when technological devices are used in classrooms it heightens students’ interest and promotes learning. It is essential to have national consensus on the importance of technology in the teaching learning process.

### Jamaica Schools Administrative Software

While JSAS is predominantly an administrative tool it is also an important component of the instructional systems present in the EEH schools. The capacity of the software to store data on attendance and performance on tests holds potential for improved assessment practices in

schools. It also enhances the role of the principal as an instructional leader. In schools where JSAS is being successfully used, there are reports of successful troubleshooting of performance related problems and implementation of interventions to address these. Principals who reported that JSAS was working well in their schools also spoke of the benefits of the computer generated information for school development planning as well as professional development in their schools. Generally, school which had all teachers participating in the JSAS data entry process seemed to be more up to date in their maintenance of the school and classroom records.

Teachers expressed concern about the need to duplicate tasks despite the claims that use of JSAS would lessen their administrative tasks. For example, teachers who enter attendance through JSAS are still required to mark an attendance register (hard copy). There is the need to make the transition from the traditional modes of record-keeping to the technologically tried and proven method.

### Gender

The EEH project design spoke specifically to addressing gender issues in general and the underachievement of boys in particular. Our evaluation revealed that individual schools took the initiative to address the underachievement of boys in their schools. However, there was no clear overall project plan to achieve this goal. The project configuration of a part time Gender Specialist and a part time Gender Consultant did not match with the goal to address the underachievement of boys. Participants were appreciative of the sensitization workshops. However, many respondents thought the sessions lacked the practical application of strategies needed for use in their school and classroom contexts.

The EEH Gender Specialist also expressed dissatisfaction with the resources allocated to this component of the project. She mentioned that more time and resources would be needed to implement a meaningful gender intervention.

Despite the inadequacies of the EEH gender intervention, individual schools have identified innovative strategies to improve the performance of boys in their schools. At least three schools created some models for addressing the underperformance of boys these include:

- Creation of boys' only classes within a coeducational school context.
- Increased recruitment and employment of male teachers.
- Creation of mentorship programs for boys.

Boys only classes were created within three of the schools visited. These schools engaged in testing and placement of the boys at selected grades in these classes. In two cases male teachers were assigned to the boys' class while in the third case a 'strong' female teacher was selected to teach the boys class. Participants reported initial resistance to this separation by teachers, parents and children. However, this configuration was later accepted. The reported greater participation of boys in the boys only class as well as improved performance on national examinations. It must be noted that the 'boys only' innovation can not be credited as a stand-alone intervention for improving boys' performance. Teacher competence and the social networks created to support the boys were important contributors to the process.

Increased recruitment and employment of male teachers was evident in one school. This school had a total of sixteen teachers seven of whom were male. The principal of the school while

endorsing the necessity to have male role models speaks to the complexity of the issues surrounding gender and the importance of leadership in improving the performance of boys. While many of the innovations were initiated by the principal, she attributes earlier efforts of the NHP to grant them subscriptions to the ASCD publications that had useful articles on gender and the underperformance of boys.

Mentorship programs for boys occurred in a few schools. This ranged from the creation of values and attitudes clubs to the assigning of individual students to teacher mentors. This was viewed as having a positive influence on the boys who were exposed to these interventions.

While gender issues have come to the fore in many educational circles in Jamaica, A clear gender policy is absent. The Education transformation efforts intended to improve the performance of students including boys has not articulated a gender strategy. There is an urgent need to empirically assess the gender situation in Jamaican primary schools and suggest a menu of strategies to address the gaps in boys' performance.

### Recommendations for addressing the Boys' Underperformance

The issue of boys' underachievement is not unique to Jamaica. Countries including the United Kingdom and Australia have identified this as a major problem since the mid 1990's and have conducted research and implemented projects to address this issue. One such project is the successful Boys' Education Lighthouse Schools (BELS) programme, which operated in Australia from 2003-2005, supported over 550 schools nationally to develop effective teaching practices and strategies that work with boys. The project raises important issues and describes the effects of a menu of intervention strategies customized for different clusters of schools. It was built on the premise that in addressing the underachievement of boys it was necessary to:

- identify and respond to individual learning styles;
- foster an effective school culture based on quality teaching practices;
- make learning relevant and connected;
- establish positive relationships with students; and
- build supportive classroom environments in which students feel valued and are encouraged to take risks.<sup>12</sup>

Key components in this intervention were research, teacher training (or professional learning), interweaving pedagogy and socialization.

It might be a useful infusion for stakeholders in the Jamaican education system to invest in research on what works with boys. This would entail the following:

- A state of the art review on boys' education with a compendium of dominant issues as well as strategies that have worked elsewhere.
- an exploration of issues related to Jamaican boys' educational performance through the conduct of surveys interviews and case studies of schools that have met relative success with their interventions of boys.

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<sup>12</sup> Australian Government Initiative. *Boys' Education Lighthouse Schools Stage Two Final Report 2006*. Available from <http://www.dest.gov.au/NR/rdonlyres/8E2B8B17-A23E-4F04-9F2D-68115ED7433B/16332/BELS2FinalReport1.pdf>

- Provide useful intervention models and strategies that might address the issue of underachievement of boys

The EEH schools that have embarked on programs to address boys' underperformance as well as the literature suggest that there are essential components of any successful boys' education program. These include:

- Self image development
- Sharing effective parenting strategies
- Emphasis on classroom strategies – including interest-based instruction
- Maintaining boys' individuality in terms of interests and learning styles (avoiding gender stereotypes)

It is with this in mind that the EEH project needs to take the gender component to another level. Necessary steps in the process includes moving past sensitization and providing innovative strategies for teaching boys' through demonstration workshops and site based meetings. There is also the need to provide media tips for educating and socializing our boys at school at home and in the wider community.

A key factor in ensuring the sustainability of the gender intervention is to form important ties of with the education transformation efforts. Since there is no formal approach to addressing boys' underperformance in the transformation efforts this is an opportunity for EEH to form a strategic alliance with the ETT to address this important social and pedagogical concern.

## **EXPANDED EDUCATION HORIZONS EVALUATION**

### **Consultant Report by Eileen Marshall**

#### **Increased Stakeholder Support for Transformational Education**

Increased stakeholder support for transformational education aims to foster private sector consciousness of the links between productivity and educational provision, and for partnerships to develop based upon institutional needs and interests of donors. Partnership has been defined by project personnel as “an alliance between two or more parties to jointly define a developmental problem and contribute to its solution whereby partners share resources, risks and rewards”. Principals interviewed have tended to ascribe partnership status to long term or traditional donors who support a range of school needs and goals.

#### **The Environment for Partnerships**

While an interviewee from the private sector umbrella group holds the position that financing education should not be the responsibility of the sector, other private sector respondents indicate a positive environment for partnerships. The consensus is that the sector has been actively supporting education at all levels of the system. Individual respondents cite:

- Major contributions to infrastructure
- New and recurrent scholarships to tertiary level students
- Equipment, furniture and materials provision
- Sponsorship of mentoring programmes

One wireless connectivity provider has undertaken to install connectivity to all project schools and also to take up the maintenance costs, estimated at J\$35m annually.

Site visit interviews with principals and partners indicate a mixed assessment of the environment for partnerships. Most school visited report a “strong” or “supportive” environment, but three principals describe it as “difficult”, “competitive” and “reluctant”. The reasons offered for the negative assessment relate to school locations, such as (a) rural small farming community (b) high volume school area, and (c) inner city community.

The environment for funding support extends beyond Jamaica. One US-based group reports providing small grants to schools, as well as supplying books to a cross section of schools. Project schools have also indicated support through connections of the church and other organizations such as Urban Farms in the US, alumni living abroad, and individuals visiting from overseas. EEH Reports detail organizations abroad that send books, or funds to purchase books.

It should be noted, however, that while corporate respondents describe a positive environment for partnerships, they also express caution given:

- The current economic climate in Jamaica
- Escalating costs of delivery of education at all levels
- Limited and targeted funding availability
- The various demands from all levels
- The difficulty of making allocation decisions

Others recommend funding possibilities that do not entail heavy reliance on corporate support:

- Reorganizing and reallocating government funding
- Establishing an education trust fund
- Using the education tax for the purpose it was intended
- Educating parents to save for their children’s education from birth, for example, through insurance schemes.

It is unlikely, therefore, that private sector partnerships will take up core input cost requirements of Jamaican schools.

## Public Private Sector Partnerships

### Grant writing

Principals of EEH project schools are empowered by their training in grant writing, research and submissions techniques aimed at equipping recipients with strategies to initiate partnerships. During site visits, praise of the training provided include: “it opened our minds to the possibilities” and “it made us realise that partnership is not begging”. All except one principal of the schools visited report that grant writing is a valuable tool to attract additional resources and all except three principals have submitted grant requests using the training they received.

### School level partnerships

Most EEH schools have more than one active private sector partnerships, ahead of the end-of-project goal stated in the EEH Semi-Annual Report June 2008, for each project school to have at least one active private sector partnership. The table that follows illustrates the distribution of partners and other private sector support, based on information given during site visit interviews with principals, school board members and some partners.

**Table 3 : Distribution of Private Sector support in project schools visited**

Schools	A	B	C	D	E	F
<b>No. Partners</b>	1	1	1	2	1	3
<b>Other small project contributors</b>	Alumni 4 Private sector donors	Alumni Individuals 1 Private Sector donor	No info	Alumni	Alumni 7 Private Sector donor	Alumni Individuals NGO 1 Foundation Service Clubs

G	H	I	J	K	L
1	2	1	2	2	3
Alumni 6 Private Sector donors	Alumni 1 NGO Individuals	5 Private Sector donors	4 Private Sector donors	3 Private Sector donors	Alumni 7 Private Sector donors

Principals report that partnerships are built upon relationships that come about through the school board, most likely the chairman, the principal, and the partner, being part of the community, taking an active interest in the school. Those schools that receive support from

other private sector sponsors describe these as “one-off” contributions targeting specific areas, for example, refurbishing the resource room or making a purchase. However, such initial responses have the potential to grow into partnerships. Partners interviewed on site visits describe the start of their commitment variously as:

- Visiting the school, seeing the need and starting to help
- Continuing a tradition of the company to assist the school
- Having partnering a school as a personal goal.

### **The Negril All Age School experience**

EEH project schools are competent and successful in generating resources. Negril All Age School in Region 4, Westmoreland is illustrative of strategies learned under NHP and EEH projects coalescing to create a signature project school. While the school had the fortune to be located in a high tourist resort community, the plant was in a dilapidated state and was transformed only after the principal acted, motivated by training she received from the NHP project. The features of this school emerged from interviews with the principal, the TEO, a board member and PTA personnel. They include:

- School development planning led to a decision to seek support for the school
- The principal submitted a grant letter to a private sector company
- The principal used collaborative approaches with all stakeholders (school board, teachers, children, parents) to identify the school’s priority needs
- The principal continues to seek sponsorship for small activities from other private sector groups, attracting funding for operations and compensatory education needs
- The school has an effective and supportive board
- The PTA and its membership are integrated into the school
- The school knows the available skills and abilities among its parent group

Most EEH project schools reporting one or more partnerships also display most, if not all the features outlined in the Negril All Age School experience.

### **Expanding partnerships**

School leaders recognize that attracting support from the private sector and other donor groups is a necessity to managing their schools efficiently. As stated above, some initial contacts can become partnerships, and respondents to questions on site visits are aware of strategies that can result in a donor becoming a partner. Principals, board members and partners have suggested that:

- The school should have a clear set of priorities
- There should be collaboration among stakeholders
- Donors should be included in school activities
- Encouragement should be given to other companies to assist
- Principals should improve on their grant writing skills
- There should be clear transparency and accountability
- Schools should show appreciation to partners and donors

## **Sustainability**

Of two project sustainability tools introduced to schools, grant writing has been successful both in its usefulness and in the confidence the skill has engendered in principals, based on the level of use reported.

The second tool, the Parent Skills Bank, is intended to (a) be a record of available skills and abilities among parents and, (b) encourage principals to place a monetary value on goods and services parents provide. Principals interviewed did not report a skills bank, some stating that they already knew the skills their parents possess. In respect of the second objective, only one school of those visited had put a monetary value on goods and services supplied by parents. This activity requires specialized knowledge that the project might consider providing, through direct training or a 'how to' manual.

## **Partner Jamaica**

EEH project schools generally attract private sector support for operational inputs such as plant maintenance, some materials and resources provision, school feeding programmes and student sponsorships. Core input costs are seen as the responsibility of government. The fact that schools need to seek supplementary financing is an indicator of government's inability to supply all of a school's budgetary requirements. Partner Jamaica is intended to be the main body to achieve sustainability of EEH project initiatives by sourcing external funding. Putting in place the necessary infrastructure to make the body operational is slated to take one year, as of May '08.

### **Effectiveness of EEH project Interventions in Meeting the Needs of Different Community Stakeholders**

EEH project interventions did not directly address the needs of school community stakeholders such as members of school boards, membership of parent teachers' associations, and parents. However, through their direct connections with the main players at the centre of project initiatives, it is possible to identify indicators of EEH effectiveness.

## **School Boards**

When asked what needs they had as school managers, some respondents focused on infrastructural shortcomings of their schools. The majority, however, aligned their needs to school performance and development issues, some of which are to:

- Cater to the needs of the children;
- Help teachers to help children;
- Improve student performance;
- Improve attendance levels; and
- Support the professional development of teachers.



There were also school-wide concerns to:

- Create a collaborative and encouraging environment;
- Manage a successful school;
- Build the reputation of the school; and
- Focus on the priority goals of the school.

Board members also included other school community stakeholders in their list of needs. They wished to foster cooperation between the school and the community, encourage parents to attend meetings and for parents to become more involved in their children's education.

Board members report knowledge of EEH through a combination of principals' presentations at board meetings, dialogue with teachers and classroom visits. Members added that this knowledge (a) helped their understanding of the literacy and numeracy needs of the children (b) helped their understanding of their role as school managers, and (c) provided direction to the board. There is no clear link between the boards' knowledge of EEH initiatives and the performance goals they identified. However, it is reasonable to conclude, given the reported satisfaction with the quality of teacher training and the overall gains in literacy and numeracy among students, that EEH has had an impact on the performance of school boards in terms of two of their goals.

## **PTA**

PTA respondents in EEH project schools visited expressed two main goals:

- To keep parents informed so that they are better able to help their children learn; and
- To involve parents in the activities of the school.

Regular meetings are held once per term at most project schools. Principals and PTA members report that parents were sensitized about EEH interventions through discussions, sharing of teachers' workshop experiences, and from invited speakers who addressed issues such as gender awareness and gave parenting tips on how to help their children to learn. Most schools also reported grade meetings that saw higher levels of parent support. These consultations kept parents abreast of their children's learning strengths and performance needs.

The PTAs encouraged classroom visits by parents and through such observations they understood more how to help their children in school. Parents reported assisting as teachers' aides, helping to make teaching aids, and at one school parents teach all classes all day, on Teachers' Day. Parents, along with the PTA plan and carry through fund raising events, the proceeds of which are used to benefit the school.

Principals report that through EEH they have become better leaders. Some describe this as: "encouraging more collaboration" and "interactivity," being "more inclusive," and instilling "self-confidence in children, teachers and parents." Such facilitative environments fostered by the principals allow school groups such as the PTA to achieve their targets. Thus, EEH was effective in helping the PTA to inform parents about their children education, and to involve parents in school activities.

## **Parents**

Under EEH parents are seen as co-managers of the school. In the collaborative environment supported by the project, parents are part of school development planning that includes goal setting and decision-making. In this capacity too, they undertake fund raising projects to fund operating and other needs of the school.

EEH has involved parents more in school operations through the Parent Skills Bank. Even though actual logs have not been reported, principals indicate knowledge of parents' skills and abilities and have successfully used this information to attract parents' support in construction, plumbing, organizing, addressing groups, 4-H and and cultural activities, among others.

EEH provides opportunities for parents to learn new skills. Three schools report opening their computer labs for parents to learn information technology skills. At one school, twenty-five parents are given IT training four hours per week in collaboration with the HEART Trust NTA. Parents also report learning from their children and through classroom observation how IT is used in teaching and learning.

EEH builds parents' knowledge of their role in their children's education. This is achieved through sensitization about EEH by principals and teachers, talks given at PTA meetings, in grade level consultations, through their classroom observations, and when they assist their children's teachers and participate in school activities such as "Read Aloud".

Parents of children in schools in the inner city do not benefit from EEH to the extent that others have. Those schools report lower attendance at PTA and grade meetings, but three principals other forms of impact on parents, namely, (a) parents have continued the breakfast programme begun under NHP (b) they are more open to communication and consultations and (c) they no longer leave their children's report at the school office.

**EXPANDING EDUCATIONAL HORIZONS EVALUATION REPORT**  
**Education Administration and Project Management**  
**John Helwig**

**SCOPE OF WORK**

Assessing the existing performance management plan; determining the effectiveness of the formative evaluations to date for ongoing measurement of project outcomes; and providing timely information for improving future performance; and assisting the Team in identifying and analyzing other available EEH and MOE performance data for project schools.

Together with the ISEMS and the CPES, assessing project school management, including SIPs, JSAS, management styles, and use of feedback from the formative evaluation to improve future performance.

Examining the cost-effectiveness of EEH interventions.

This reporter participated in the evaluation of the Expanding Educational Horizons (EEH) Project in Jamaica from September 3 to 21. He met and interviewed project staff, USAID staff, MOE officials, NGO leaders, school principals and teachers. Fourteen interview reports were delivered to the evaluation team leader.

**Project Management Plan (PMP):**

The evaluator met with the project consultant in charge of Monitoring and Evaluation, Dr. Doreen Faulkner to discuss the “Project Implementation Plan 2007-2008”(revised in December 2007) that he was provided by Aguirre. Dr. Faulkner provided a copy of the “Summary Performance Data.” This table contains the basic data that is reported to USAID. In a meeting with USAID on September 22, the team leader was handed a copy of a “Formative Evaluation Report” dated October 29, 2007 which was subsequently provided to this reporter, who had already left the island. The team leader also learned that the “Formative Evaluation Report” for the 2007/08 period should be delivered to USAID at the end of September 2008.

The following table contains the Summary Performance Data from project start-up through academic year 2007/08 for project schools and excludes the NGO component.<sup>13</sup> Some data from the 2007/08 school year has still not been reported since it has to be obtained from the MOE.

Indicators 1 through 3, in the form that was presented to the evaluator, report “aggregate” numbers; i.e. the numbers group primary schools with NGOs. Since the evaluation team was asked by USAID to focus on the primary school component of EEH, we requested that project staff segregate the numbers, so that those reported below would only reflect “primary school” numbers. For indicator 1, the actual number of administrators from project schools trained in 2006 was 64 and in 2007 was 56. In 2006 there were 28 education officers trained and in 2007 there were 25 trained. The total numbers in the chart below include NGO administrators in both years, and persons from CETT and the MOE in the 2006 total.

RESULT	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR			ACADEMIC YEAR				
				2006	2007		2008	
Area	Indicator	Unit of Measure	Disaggregation	Baseline	Target	Actual	Target	Actual

<sup>13</sup> The Project Director reported that the data corresponds to *academic* years and not *fiscal* years as stated on the table handed to the evaluator. Data regarding NGOs was not included in this table.

Program element	1. Number of administrators & officials trained with USG support	Individual	Male	27	-	23		28
			Female	114	-	67		129
			Total	141	161	90	100	157
<b>Basic Education</b>	2. Number of learners enrolled in GSU supported primary schools	Individual	Male	16,108		Not available		
			Female	14,304				
			Total	30,412		26,087 <sup>14</sup>		
	3. Number of primary school teacher/educators trained with USG support	Individual	Male	64				
			Female	291				
			Total	355	404	354		
	4. Number of PTAs and/or similar "school" governance structures supported.	Organization	None	53	63	66	71	
SO12	6. % of Grade 4 students at or above Grade 4 level in Literacy	Per cent	Male	41	46	48.2	49	
			Female	72	75	67.6	69	
			Total	55.8	59	57.6	59	
	7. % of Grade 4 students at or above Grade 4 level in Numeracy	Per cent	Male			40	42	
			Female			52.2	54	
			Total	<sup>15</sup>		45.6	47	
	9a. % of project schools that demonstrate at least four management best practices	Per cent	None	31.8	50	50.7	55	
IR 1	10. Average grade 3 math scores	Average as percent of total score	Male	56.7	57	48.9	60	
			Female	62.5	63	56.06	65	
			Total	59.6	60	52.31 <sup>16</sup>	62	
	11. Average grade 3 Language Arts scores	Average as a percent of total score	Male	56	58		60	
			Female	64.1	65		66	
Total	60	62	<sup>17</sup>	64				
IR 3	13. Number of partnerships established	Number	Project Schools	39	43	165	48	

<sup>14</sup> The project director reports: Please note the reduction in the number of learners in 2007. At the start of the project in 2006 the baseline of 30,412 represented students in grades 7 – 9 in 8 up-graded high schools that were part of the original project proposal. This was in addition to the students in the NGOs and the primary schools.

<sup>15</sup> There was no baseline reported.

<sup>16</sup> These results are for 48 schools.

<sup>17</sup> Not ready at this time.

	14. US\$ amount leveraged by partnerships (PPP adjusted)	Number	Project Schools	250K	300K	539K	350K	
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Indicator 2 reports on the number of learners enrolled in EEH primary schools. The original PMP was developed before USAID cut the project budget, so that the original baseline target number includes 12 NGOs and students in 8 schools that had grades 7 to 9. The number reported for 2007 is, according to the project director, the actual number of learners in EEH schools in grades 1 to 6.

Indicator 3 baseline includes the original NGO teacher/educators, as does the target for 2007. The actual number for 2007, 345, is the number of primary teacher/educators who received from one hour to as much as 65 hours of training. There are three types of training: residential workshops cluster and on-site. The October 29, 2007 report provides a table that shows that in 2007, in residential workshops, 61 teachers were trained in literacy, 63 in numeracy and 52 in educational technology. A total of 74 persons attended 15 or more hours of cluster or on-site training in 2007. Thus it would seem that 15 hours is considered a minimum or “threshold” level of training. If we assume that the teachers who participated in residential workshops received 15 or more hours of training, then those 176 plus the 74 who received over 15 hours in on-site/cluster events, would total 250 teacher/educators who met or exceeded the minimum level of training.

With respect to Indicator 4, the team found that all the EEH schools, with the exception of the Bull Bay school had active PTAs. According to the October 29, 2007 report, “an active PTA is described as having existing executive officers with a president, having regularly planned meetings and participating in the programme of the school.” There is no mention as to what percentage of students should be represented at PTA meetings, i.e. no established minimum percentage that would indicate “satisfactory” attendance. This evaluator found that the percentage of students represented by a parent or caretaker attending the PTA meetings varies greatly; e.g. the principal of St. Peter Claver school in Kingston, with 914 students, reported that over 700 parents (approximately 75%) attended the last PTA meeting. The principal at Devon Pen reported that less than 20 parents (approximately 20%) attended the last PTA meeting there.

Indicator 5, “Number of textbooks and learning materials provided with USG assistance” was eliminated in agreement with USAID.

If the percentages reported in Indicator 6 are correct, there seems to have been very little overall improvement in literacy. Furthermore, it seems that the performance of girls has dropped, while that of boys has improved. This would seem to indicate that there has been some improvement in attention to gender issues in the schools. It might also mean that teachers are, because of being encouraged to give special attention to boys, giving less attention to girls.

There is no baseline established for Indicator 7. The percentages reported as actual for the year 2007 might be considered as baseline, so that when the 2008 percentages are available, it can be determined if the target has been met or not. We were told that these figures are not yet available.

Indicator 9a refers to the percentage of project schools that demonstrate *at least four* management best practices. There are seven best practice criteria in the document, “Basic Education PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT PLAN For Expanding Educational Horizons Ministry of Education and Youth, Jamaica”:

- staff development (on-site training sessions held for teachers, regular planning and updates carried out);
- use of Jamaican Schools Administrative System, to track student results;
- engaged PTA (keep minutes of proceedings, has elected officers, holds regular meetings, etc; participates in projects/activities)
- school physical environment conducive to learning (access to and use of learning materials, desired classroom strategies and equipment (technology))
- programs in place to support and encourage student attendance to be at or above national average, etc.
- School Improvement Plans prepared for current year and used to support literacy, numeracy, technology etc
- School Board active (Is constituted, meets regularly, participates in school activities)

In the October 29, 2007 report there are only four practices mentioned:

- An active PTA, and an Active School Board (although the latter is sometimes not in the control of the school),
- A School Improvement Plan, with Action Plans which are up-dated yearly,
- Regular in-house staff development training and supporting other EEH training workshops (cluster and residential),
- The Jamaica Schools Administrative Software installed or at least one computer, and used by teachers to manage student performance and other data.

The cited report goes on to say that “EEH staff has given most support to schools in the latter 3 areas.” Then in the next paragraph the report states, “Information for three of the five areas was obtained from the ratings, which were done using the graduation criteria and was supplemented by the data from the Principal’s term report...Schools were rated as satisfactory if they received a rating of 2 or more on each of the four areas other than the staff development sessions.” We were not provided with the checklist/questionnaire or the rating scale.

After visiting five project schools and meeting with the other team members who had visited twelve project schools<sup>18</sup> the team has concluded that the per cent reported is correct, in that schools are undertaking staff development, using the JSAS, PTAs are engaged, School Improvement Plans are prepared (MOE requirement), and School Boards are active.

Indicators 10 and 11 report the average as a per cent of total scores on Grade 3 literacy and math tests that are administered annually. Although in our visits we were told that these scores have improved significantly, a glance at the percentage numbers reported in the table do not reveal a “significant” improvement. In fact, although the actual score for 2007 reflects only 48 of the 71 schools, it shows a decline from the baseline in math. And the targets that have been set for both math and literacy do not seem to be “significant” given the amount of training, clinical

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<sup>18</sup> The team and this reporter actually visited one particular school at different times; otherwise there were actually 16 schools visited among the members of the team.

supervision, materials and technology that the project provides. It will be interesting to see the final results for both math and literacy for 2007 and 2008 for all project schools.

Team member Eileen Marshall was charged with evaluating partnerships and it is recommended that her report be consulted with respect to the numbers reported in Indicator 13, and the amounts reported in Indicator 14.

### **Problems in assessing progress in Literacy and Numeracy Learning**

In our interview with the Project Director she reported that no formative evaluation has been undertaken by either staff members or consultants. She did report that at the last summer workshop, over 30 principals and classroom teachers made presentations on new techniques and tools that they had created and implemented. We agreed that these actions, on the part of the principals and teachers can be considered as a “form” of formative evaluation: it is what a good project should be about, and that is, empowering the beneficiaries to be proactive, to “go outside the box” and try new things, and report on the results.

The evaluator was provided with the document “Formative Evaluation Report” dated October 29, 2007, after having left the island. In essence this document constitutes an “Annual Report”. Formative evaluation of student achievement, in this case in literacy and numeracy, should cover test results of students in experimental (project) schools as well as in control (non-project) schools. The project design does not require such formative evaluation. Thus, while it is possible to show that students in project schools have increased their achievement level, it is not possible for the MOE and USAID to judge the effectiveness of the intervention?

The project did develop the national Grade 4 numeracy test, and it is now used in all schools. However, there has been no comparison of the results in project schools with non-project schools. This same form of evaluation should be undertaken with respect to the Grade 4 literacy test.

### **Cost Effectiveness**

According to the Planning Institute of Jamaica’s 2007 Economic and Social Survey, education is financed by the GOJ as well as the private sector and community and faith-based entities.<sup>19</sup> Families also contribute in the form of cost sharing at the secondary and tertiary levels and as payments for services at all levels (e.g. partial payment for school lunches, uniforms, books, etc.).

In 2007/08 the GOJ allocated 12.6 per cent of the national budget to education, an increase of 6.7 per cent above the 2006/07 allocation. Approximately J\$42.2 billion was allocated for recurrent expenditure of which 91.0 per cent was earmarked for salaries and other emoluments (educator uniforms, etc.), and 32.5 per cent or J\$15.3 billion was allocated for primary education.

In 2007/08 capital spending increased to J\$5.7 billion from J\$3.5 in 2006/07. The increase was due to additional support for the ETT and Northwestern Schools Project. Of the capital

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<sup>19</sup> “Economic and Social Survey Jamaica 2007.” *Planning Institute of Jamaica*, (2008): 22.1.

budget, 22.6 per cent was allocated to multilateral and bilateral projects, the major portion to the PESP financed by IADB. The Planning Institute reports that in 2006, 45.6 per cent of the capital budget went to PESP, 38 per cent to Reform of Secondary Education, 14.8 to Enhancement of Basic Schools, 1.8 per cent to Improved Education of Targeted Jamaican Youth and 0.2 per cent to the New Horizon Project.

With regards to the cost effectiveness of project interventions, we were not able to obtain a copy of the project budget neither original nor current. We requested this data on day 2 but on the last full day of work were informed that we would have to request the budgets from the Juarez home office.

When one considers the amount of funds invested in improving literacy and math scores on Grade 3 tests, and performance on Grade 4 tests, on such items as salaries and time on task of project staff, including those funded by non-project sources (literacy and numeracy specialists as well as education specialists focusing on literacy and numeracy), materials, equipment, workshop expenses, travel and per diems, maintenance of equipment, electricity and batteries used in schools, the question of cost effectiveness becomes very important. This evaluator feels that in order to demonstrate that the project has been cost effective, it is necessary to demonstrate that the students in project schools have out-performed students in non-project schools. There have been no comparisons of scores and performance in literacy and numeracy, nor, for that matter, the performance of principals, PTAs or Boards with non-project or “control” schools. This was not considered in the project design, so, in essence, the matter of cost effectiveness is a mute point.

The EEH project did invest in design, construction and piloting of the new Grade 4 exam (GAIN). This test was piloted in project schools, and at the end of the 2007/08 school year was administered in all Jamaican primary school 4<sup>th</sup> grades. There were problems regarding the reporting of results, but, in the opinion of project specialists, if better training is given in the 2008/09 school year these problems can be avoided, and the test can be used regularly. Investing funds in this way, through piloting and then scaling up for national use can be considered a cost effective investment of USG funds.

On the matter of JSAS, the evaluation team was told that the MOE, in deciding that a MIS system is necessary, has considered JSAS as a valid system that might be usable, and thus avoid having to build a system from scratch. The MOE asked the EEH to add an area to the JSAS and web-enable the system. This is being undertaken, and if proven successful, will indeed save investment costs for the MOE, and thus the project investment in JSAS can ultimately be considered as a cost effective investment of USG funds.

### **School Management**

The evaluator interviewed PIU staff, five school principals in their schools, and 17 education specialists, at a group meeting. As noted above in discussing Indicator 9a, there has been significant improvement in the performance of project schools.



School Improvement Plans: The MOE requires all school principals to prepare School Improvement Plans (SIPs) annually, so this is an exercise that all principals produce in some form or another. With assistance from project specialists, the principals of project schools have fine tuned their SIPs. I reviewed several and found them ambitious, full of things to be done and proposals on where to find the resources to do them. The principals were trained in proposal writing with the goal of developing partnerships with individuals, business entities or NGOs, and those interviewed showed me some of the results achieved; e.g. remodeling buildings or classrooms or creating a literacy corner or room, equipment, books and materials, internet connections, fences around the property, retaining walls, etc. They also provided anecdotal information on results achieved; e.g. in-house workshops, parent contributions, and student achievement meeting or exceeding the SIP goals.

JSAS usage: It was reported by the PIU specialist Nika Duncan-Donaldson and by the principals visited that JSAS has made an impact; it is used regularly and appreciated by principals and teachers as it saves time and has steered them towards using modern technology. The team was told that the Minister of Education has urged that information on student behavior be added to the JSAS and that the system should be “web-enabled” and installed in all schools and become the principal tool for data gathering and reporting for the MOE. The project JSAS specialists report that version 7.0, which includes the system for gathering behavioral information, will be ready to test in 10 schools that have internet connections, in November 2008. The project director reports that she has had discussions at the ministerial level regarding the fact that most schools are not “internet enabled” and thus will have to use the JSAS on CDs and that there will have to be either a central or regional locations for downloading and merging the data. These are decisions that the MOE will have to make based on the results of the “web-enabled” pilot testing to be undergone by the EEH project.

Management Styles: All of the principals interviewed had very different personalities; however, there are some similarities in management styles that obviously are tied directly to the training they have all received, mostly together. They are all focused on obtaining graduation status, or, if they have done so, to sustain the levels, even supersede them. They are all aware that student achievement in literacy and numeracy is the “bottom line” and that how they define their school improvement plans must be built around this objective. They are all proud to be a part of EEH and committed to making sure that the project mandates are fulfilled.

Use of feedback from “formative” evaluation: Testing is carried out in the schools. This reporter did inquire as to whether the principals and teachers do analyze test results to identify the strong and weak areas and discuss how to best achieve improvement in the weak areas. We did not obtain, nor did the “annual report” contain any information as to training plans or designs; i.e. did any training involve discussion of test results? In the meeting with the “multi-faceted” education specialists it was reported that these people did review test results and did work with teachers on these issues. It is also apparent that feedback from evaluations of management practices has been used in training and in clinical supervision of principals. As mentioned previously, in the recent summer workshop, some 32 participants reported on actions they had taken as a result of detecting areas that needed improvement.

The 2008/09 school year had just begun as this evaluation was being undertaken. The schools have administered diagnostic tests in all grades. The education specialists will complete their contracts in six weeks. Thus it would be a good time for the project and education specialists to review the results of these tests with the teachers and principals of the EEH schools and agree on ways to deal with any weak areas encountered.

### **Other Observations**

One of the original management best practice criteria is that the school physical environment is conducive to learning. This, in the opinion of this evaluator is very difficult to assess. Indeed there is “general access to and use of learning materials” and there are “desired classroom strategies and equipment and use of technology”. However, the physical aspect of the buildings and classrooms has much to be desired; the schools are generally large open “warehouse-like” buildings with plywood screens separating classes. This arrangement inhibits any “joyous learning” experiences; i.e. singing, acting out or dramatization of situations by students, in essence all activities that involve moving around. It is certainly difficult to keep children quiet and immovable in a classroom for six hours. (There are recess periods, but this evaluator was not able to ascertain if teachers supervised them or “facilitated” activities during them.) The student desks are mostly the traditional individual type that inhibits any sort of grouping other than “auditorium-style” seating. Although the principals that this evaluator interviewed reported that attendance was excellence, in most cases exceeding 95 per cent, they were unable to cite specific “programs” to support and encourage student attendance. Of course attendance is obligatory according to law, but it is not clear just to what degree it is enforced. Attendance might have to do with the lunch provided, the attraction of technology, the “changed attitudes” of teachers (e.g. they are more caring and their methodologies are more “user friendly”) or the increased awareness and interest of parents in schooling for their children. It would be interesting to undertake some research on these issues.

The project has approximately 15 months left. It was built on the former NHP and has been able to consolidate and strengthen the major activities/objectives of that project as well as those of the present project. Teachers have been trained and Literacy and Numeracy scores have shown some improvement in the schools, although no formal scientific comparisons have been made. Principals have also been trained and have developed and implemented improvement plans and produced results, although there has been no formal studies undertaken to determine the depth, breadths and costs of improvements. Technology has been provided to schools, principals and teachers are using the JSAS, and teachers and students are using modern equipment which supposedly contributes to the improvement in academic achievement, although no formal scientific studies have been undertaken to prove this. It was reported that people in the ETT have questioned the use of technological equipment. PTAs are active in most schools, but what they actually contribute and how their participation might be improved using lessons learned in the most successful schools has not been documented. The project schools are receiving punctual clinical supervision; the results obtained should be documented.

One can conclude that children are regularly attending school and are learning, although there is a need for formative evaluation to scientifically demonstrate this. Teachers are very pleased with the training they have received and with the clinical supervision they continue to

receive. Since the clinical supervision provided by the team of “multi-faceted” education specialists will terminate shortly, it will be interesting to see whether this will affect teacher/educator and general school performance. This should be investigated as it could provide information to guide the ETT in developing the framework for the SOWs of the Regional Education Agencies.

The project director has stated that there is a need for active research. We agree and would encourage the project to undertake research to demonstrate, scientifically, how the project schools have improved; in essence, demonstrate “What Works”. The research could be outsourced to independent entities as this will help guarantee objectivity. Project staff and specialists from ETT and MOE should jointly draft the terms of reference for the research, and jointly analyze/evaluate results and determine strategies for acting on the results.

Almost all of the people interviewed, when asked what were the strengths of EEH mentioned the training received. And, when asked what is still needed, they requested more training, particularly in how to teach math and science, and in how to change behavior. Also detected is a need for further training in school management, including in such areas as how to raise funds and engender partnerships, how to establish priorities for investment of funds or identification and use of goods and services and how to evaluate and report on results obtained.

The GOJ has set forth on a journey with the goal of transforming the educational system. A task force rendered a report, followed by the creation of the Educational Transformation Team which has set goals and proceeded to move on them. The ETT has interacted with the EEH and will certainly pay heed to EEH best practices, or, “What Works”.

Therefore it is recommended that USAID consider funding technical assistance for training of trainers in new innovative methodologies that can be used in both pre-service as well as in-service training programs. The training should use innovative methodologies that energize teachers and train them to make the classroom a vibrant and enjoyable learning environment, especially for *facilitating* the subject areas of math and science. The training should also focus on how to bring about behavioral change in children; how to develop self-image, appreciation of values and life skills in children as well as teachers.

USAID should also consider providing Technical Assistance for the establishment of the regional offices that involves team building and design of terms of reference and scopes of work (annual work plans) for the various positions, especially the education officials and others that will be working directly with schools. The TA should also focus on design of formative evaluation instruments and training in their administration, analysis and use of results.

## ANNEX 4: School Visit Reports

### EXPANDING EDUCATIONAL HORIZONS PROJECT EVALUATION SITE VISIT REPORT –SEPTEMBER 2008

**School:** Jericho Primary

**Date:** September 12, 2008

**Region:** 4

**Enrollment:** 680

**Parish:** St. Catherine

**Contacts: 10 adults, affiliations listed below**

<b>Position:</b>
<b>Principal</b>
<b>Board Chairman</b>
<b>Board member</b>
<b>Resource Teacher</b>
<b>Resource Teacher</b>
<b>Resource Teacher</b>
<b>Teacher</b>
<b>Partner</b>
<b>PTA President</b>
<b>PTA co-opted member</b>

**Students Interviewed: six students in grade 6**

#### **Background:**

Jericho primary is located in the parish of St. Catherine and is situated in a rural farming community. The school is located in close proximity to a bauxite mining company and about 1 kilometer from the main thoroughfare from Kingston to Ocho Rios. As a designated professional development center, the school has a computer lab as well as other multimedia resources provided by both EEH and NHP.

Jericho, a graduated EEH school, has experienced steady gains in achievement and enrollment over the past decade. This creates a challenge in terms of space and infrastructure. The classrooms are housed in a regular auditorium style building with several classes separated by chalkboard, a small block of classrooms made from shipping containers (trailers) and a small wooden structure built by Food for the Poor and a furnished space covered only by zinc roof held up by wooden poles.

The principal of the school is currently engaging in Doctoral studies in education administration. She promotes professional development and upgrading of her staff. She attributed the rapid growth in student enrollment and performance to her efforts as principal which were bolstered by two USAID projects. She attributes her initial training in educational leadership to NHP.

The school in its bid to address the underperformance of boys has experimented with innovations including teaching boys separately as well as targeting their fathers' participation in their son's academic lives. The creation of a fathers' PTA is an example of Jericho's efforts to improve the welfare of boys through social interventions.

Teachers spoke highly of the training and materials they received from EEH. They credit their exposure at residential workshops and other training sessions with building their confidence to share ideas with colleagues as well as to try new instructional strategies.

Students were articulate about their teachers' creative teaching strategies. They mentioned that learning was fun at Jericho Primary. They were also able to provide information on the EEH Project as well as the materials their school received from the project.

### **School Improvement Plan:**

The creation of a school development plan is a team effort and it is seen as an integral part of the school's improvement effort. The plan is used as a tool for setting goals, monitoring progress and gauging achievement. The use of JSAS is considered a part of the Jericho school culture. It is also viewed as an essential tool for entering and generating data that informs school achievement and goal setting.

### **Training**

The principal and staff of Jericho are highly appreciative of the training they received under EEH. The principal has exposed at least six teachers to the resource teacher training experiences in order to ensure that the school benefits from a cadre of resource teachers who conduct workshops in literacy, numeracy and technology. While there have been isolated cases of inter school collaboration on training this has not been done in a systematic way.

While the teachers highlight the importance of training, they also mention challenges of interacting with their peers for training purposes. Resource teachers mentioned that their colleagues would pay more attention to training offered by "persons from outside" the school community.

### **Materials**

Teachers listed the materials they received from USAID including Laptop Computer, multimedia projector, boom box, Alphasmart, digital camera, Television, Books and others. They ranked the projectors, laptop computers and the alpha smart most useful in their instructional activities.

### **Partnerships**

Although the school has sent out 25 proposals and received only one positive response, reports indicate a supportive partnership environment. Support comes from two government entities, the nearby bauxite company, two big businesses, past students, associates of the principal living abroad, and small businesses. The most significant partner is AEROTEL, which focuses on maintaining the school plant. They also provided the container classrooms, give technical support and in-kind benefits. Their support has become a tradition with the school having continued through two former chairmen of the company.

### **School Board**

EEH supports the goal of the Board for a successful school. The training received under NHP has helped members to understand their role as school managers. Members are knowledgeable about EEH in terms of the resources and materials as well as the teacher training provided. The impact of EEH has resulted in increased enrollment leading to a need for more classrooms. Last year the school graduated 90 pupils but this year's registration figure is 147, with pupils seeking admission from as far as 12 miles away. The school was able to admit only 50% of those seeking entry to the school.

### **Parent and Community Involvement**

The PTA is vibrant and members of the executive work closely together for the benefit of the school. As many as 100 parents attend meetings and at the recent Fathers' PTA approximately 50 fathers attended. Parents support the school through fundraisers mainly, and also contribute to the breakfast programme. They expressed concerns about the performance of boys and children who need nutritional support. They, however, report improvement in their children's performance in literacy and numeracy.

### **Recommendations**

Interviewees would like (1) future teacher training to include the social dimensions (2) parenting education (3) board members included in seminars about the project as they represent their schools to the wider community (4) more gender teaching/learning strategies.

**EXPANDING EDUCATIONAL HORIZONS EVALUATION  
SCHOOL VISIT REPORT SEPTEMBER '08**

**School:** Denham Town Primary  
**Date:** '08 September 18  
**Region:** 1

**Enrollment:** 1000  
**Parish:** Kingston

**Contacts: 9 adults, affiliations listed below**

<b>POSITION:</b>
<b>Principal</b>
<b>Board Chairman</b>
<b>PTA past president</b>
<b>Vice Principal</b>
<b>Resource Teacher</b>
<b>Resource Teacher</b>
<b>Resource Teacher</b>
<b>Resource Teacher</b>
<b>Resource Teacher</b>

**Students Interviewed: Four students in grade 3**

**Background**

Denham Town Primary is located in the western section of Kingston at the intersection of two of the city's thoroughfares. The principal, two vice-principals, thirty-seven teachers and two guidance counselors serve the student population that has an equal number of boys and girls. There are twenty-five classes and the average class size is thirty-two.

The school plant, a series of imposing sturdy two storey buildings, occupies a rectangular space between the police station and the high school and comprises three concrete three-storey block structures. The paved school yard affords limited space for children to play. The students at Denham Town Primary play Netball and other court games at the high school next door.

Denham Town has not yet graduated from EEH and the vice-principal cites low PTA attendance as the unmet criterion that has prevented this achievement.

**School Improvement Plan:**

A school improvement plan is produced every three years. It positions the school in terms of its current situation and sets targets for the three year period. An outstanding target which has not been met is the installation of a computer lab. In terms of personnel, the Denham Town Administration is pleased with accomplishment of six qualified teachers as technology coaches.

**Training**

The resource teachers speak of the boost in their confidence levels brought about by their EEH training exposure. They also attribute better understanding of their subject matter and methodologies to the training they received,

An interesting revelation was that vice principals were not invited to EEH training. The vice principal expressed dissatisfaction with this situation since they engaged in more hands on classroom supervision than the principal. She suggests greater involvement of VP's in workshops and other training activities.

### **Materials**

Teachers listed the materials they received from EEH including technological devices, print materials and manipulatives. They highly commended the EEH materials distribution process as they received either hands-on training or accompanying literature with instructions on the use of these materials.

### **Impact of EEH on School and Community**

The respondent reports that the programme of training has helped the school to be more organized and focused on the needs of the children. A constant 12% of GSAT graduates have gained places in traditional high schools and recipient schools of other graduates report increasing improvement in student performance with each new group. The school, however, has not yet graduated as there have been fluctuations in literacy and numeracy performances.

### **Partnerships**

Most support is as a result of a personal relationship between the principal and the donor or arising from, for example, winning a science competition where a company wishes to identify with the school's success. The principal has found a general reluctance among companies to invest in inner-city schools, but believes that attracting partnerships is a matter of survival. The school has one traditional partner with other support coming from two banks, a telecommunications company that set up the school's connectivity system and a foundation. Scholarships and assistance to needy students come in too from companies and individuals such as past students and the MP who is also the Prime Minister.

### **School Board**

The board's focus is to improve student performance in literacy and numeracy and to foster cooperation between school and community. The board works to this end by encouraging parents to identify more closely with the school and to support PTA meetings. However, there are counter-forces within the community that distract parents from giving full support to their children's education. Since EEH the chairman has noted a higher level of enthusiasm and focus among the teachers.

### **Parents and Community**

PTA meetings are held once per term with 40% attendance. Grade meetings are also held and these are usually better supported. Some parents learn about EEH when they meet with their children's teachers or visit classrooms and see the resources in use. The PTA has continued the breakfast feeding programme started under NHP and although funding is inadequate, 109 pupils



are fed daily. The PTA would like to see more parents visit their children's classrooms and their greater involvement in fund raising activities.

**Respondents' Recommendations**

USAID should:

Continue to train resource teachers in literacy and numeracy

**EXPANDING EDUCATIONAL HORIZONS PROJECT EVALUATION  
SITE VISIT REPORT –SEPTEMBER 2008**

**Date:** September 10, 2008  
**School:** Negril All Age  
**Region:** 4

**Enrollment:** 530  
**Parish:** Westmoreland

**Contacts: 11 adults, affiliations listed below**

<b>Position</b>
<b>Principal</b>
<b>Resource Teacher</b>
<b>Classroom Teacher</b>
<b>Resource Teacher</b>
<b>Resource Teacher</b>
<b>Resource Teacher</b>
<b>Resource Teacher</b>
<b>School Board member, Secy.</b>
<b>PTA Treasurer</b>
<b>PTA Resource person</b>
<b>TEO, Region 4</b>

**Students Interviewed: 15 students total; five students in grade 1, four students in grade 2, two students in grade 3, and four students in grade 4.**

**Background:**

Negril All Age is an Expanded Educational Horizons school located in a thriving tourist location in Jamaica. The school operates on a single shift system which runs from 8:30 am to 3:00 pm. The School is located in the town of Negril at the western tip of the island, which has the longest beach (seven miles) in Jamaica. Teachers serve grades one to six, including a total of five resource teachers.

Negril is viewed as the flagship of stakeholder partnership among EEH schools since the plant has been expanded and refurbished due to the efforts the Rock House Foundation.

Negril, which is separated only by a road from the Caribbean Sea, has blocks of buildings that host classrooms, a reading/technology room and administrative offices. The buildings are painted in yellow and are mad of concrete and wood. Despite the addition of buildings, some classrooms are not spacious enough to accommodate grouping and other configurations.

The interviews revealed that students and teachers were well aware of the Expanding Educational Horizons project and the alignment of the project to the school goals for improved literacy and numeracy. They praised the project for the resources provided and training given to resource teachers and teachers. Teachers stated that student performance had improved since the inception of EEH. There have not been recent concerns over the performance of boys since they their performance seems to be close to the performance as girls. The increased use of technology

is highlighted as an important part of improving student interest and performance. Teachers also report improved parent participation and interest in the school affairs.

Among the positives highlighted by students was the teaching styles of their teachers and the use of technology in their classrooms. Pupils spoke of the caring attitude of their teachers and their interest in promoting student comprehension.

**School Development Plan:**

The school development plan is a collaborative venture involving the principal, teachers, school board and PTA members. This document provides a brief situational analysis of the school and has literacy and numeracy gains as the central focus. The planners advocate the use of technology and innovative strategies as assets for educational achievement. Partnerships (community & private sector) were highlighted as possibilities for promoting growth and acquiring resources. The school development plan provided focus for school activities and critical achievement targets.

**Classroom Observations:**

The Instructional Systems/Education Materials Specialist (ISEMS) observed the classroom of a technology resource teacher. The use of NHP strategies was evident in the class. The teacher used a range of materials including manipulatives and technology to teach number concepts. The use of computers generated interest. However, the proportion of five or six students per computer created a challenge in completing assigned tasks.

Children in the classroom were alert and exhibited provided appropriate responses to the teacher's questions.

**Training:**

Resource Teachers and the principal have received training from the project in national workshops. In addition, other teachers benefitted from site based workshops conducted by the EEH staff. The resource teachers spoke positively about the training they received and of its value to their classroom practice.

**Materials:**

The school had benefitted from project allocated materials including a multimedia projector, computers, color laser printer and other devices. Materials for the previous (New Horizons) project are also in working order (TV, VCR, OHP, audio cassette player) to this school. There is a computer which is loaded with the JSAS software and is used for up-to date record keeping on student and staff related matters.

**Partnerships:**

The principal sent a grant letter to Rock House hotel and the response was a team visit from the affiliated Foundation. They requested vision statements which had been prepared under the NHP initiative. A series of collaborative discussions followed among the main stakeholders, including the children. A complete transformation of the physical school plant resulted. Other partnerships exist with hotels and small businesses in the community.

**School Board:**

The Board meets once per term and for emergencies such as staff or student issues. The chairman has a good relationship with Rock House Foundation as well as with members of staff of the school. The TEO states that the Board is very effective and endorses the hard word work of the chairman.

**Parent and Community Involvement:**

Approximately 50 parents attend PTA meetings. However, parents visit the school regularly and assist in various ways through fundraisers, support at 4-H and cultural activities, among others. They also continue to volunteer for the breakfast programme begun under NHP. Both parents and principal believe that improved nutrition of the children has impacted their achievement academically.

**Recommendations:**

To improve what EEH does, the principal would like to see a deeper level of teacher training and more teaching strategies shared. The Education specialists should continue to make site visits in order to maintain the momentum.

Future initiatives should (1) expand on parenting education (2) include a programme to teach social graces.

**EXPANDING EDUCATIONAL HORIZONS EVALUATION  
SCHOOL SITE VISIT REPORT SEPTEMBER '08**

**School:** Crescent Primary                      **Enrollment:** 935  
**Date:** September 18, 2008                      **Parish:** St. Catherine  
**Region:** 6

**Contacts: 14 adults, affiliations listed below**

<b>POSITIONS</b>
<b>Principal</b>
<b>Board Chairman</b>
<b>Partner</b>
<b>Resource Teacher</b>
<b>Resource Teacher</b>
<b>Resource Teacher</b>
<b>Resource Teacher</b>
<b>Resource Teacher</b>
<b>Resource Teacher</b>
<b>Resource Teacher</b>
<b>Resource Teacher</b>
<b>Resource Teacher</b>
<b>Recipient, Outstanding Parent Award</b>
<b>Parent</b>

**Students Interviewed: 22 students total; nine students in grade 2, six students in grade 3, and seven students in grade 4.**

**Background:**

Crescent Primary is a government owned school located on the main thoroughfare from Kingston to Ocho Rios. This school, formerly hosting a Junior High department, is a graduated EEH school and the staff and principal cascading on the list of priorities.

Crescent has 38 teachers on staff of whom at least nine are EEH resource teachers. The principals spoke of the necessity to get as many of her teachers as possible trained as resource teachers so that they may influence the teaching quality in the school as well as to cascade best practices to non-EEH schools.

Gender concerns are present at Crescent primary and the school has experimented with interventions that seek to address the issue of boy's underachievement. These initiatives include having a boys' only class taught by a "strong" female teacher. The school has noted improvements in the boys' performance and attributes this to the various efforts within the school.

The classrooms visited at Crescent were colorful spacious, and well ventilated. Charts and mobiles were present in these classrooms. Furnishing was mostly traditional combination three seater desks. However, teachers attempted to cluster the furniture to facilitate grouping.

**School Improvement Plan:**

The principal indicated that the SIP was used on a daily basis. It is also used for self-evaluation at the end of each academic year. The development of this plan enjoys broad-based participation including teachers, Principal, Board members, and the school's watchman.

**Training:**

Principal and teachers of Crescent spoke highly of the training they received through EEH. While the teachers were positive about the workshops they were vocal about the feverish pace of the activities and recommended that more time be spent with each session instead of packing too many sessions in for a limited time. Crescent also speaks of training they have offered to other schools. Their resource teachers have presented both at the primary and the teacher training levels. They have also conducted training for EEH and non EEH schools.

**Materials:**

Teachers described the EEH materials as invaluable. They were impressed with the usefulness of the materials as well as the support they received in using them effectively in the classroom.

**Impact of EEH on School and Community**

The principal reports improvement in student performance in literacy and numeracy and increased self-confidence in children, teachers and parents. The status of the school has also risen in the eyes of the community.

**Partnerships:**

The respondent reports that the environment for partnerships is difficult as there is a high volume of schools vying for support from the same business owners, many of whom do not live in Spanish Town and so do not identify closely with the community. Others are constrained by the economic conditions. The principal has written about twenty grant letters and has received support from the local office of JNBS, considered to be the most significant partner. Last school year the school received in-kind contributions and services mainly from parents also, valuing over J\$3m. The next approach is to submit proposals beyond the school community.

The partner interviewed is a hardware merchant who gives regular support at school events and helps to maintain the buildings and grounds.

**School Board:**

The board meets once per month and members see their purpose as meeting the needs of children and teachers in the school. Members do regular classroom visits and encourage teachers to discuss their concerns. EEH has highlighted weaknesses in literacy and numeracy teaching and learning and has helped to improve both teacher and pupil performance.

**Parent Support:**

The PTA meets monthly and has an average attendance of 200, which is considered a large turnout. Parents report that meetings are interactive in that parents are informed about school goals and they are encouraged to make suggestions on how to achieve those goals and to determine their roles in the process. Indirectly, parents receive EEH training as teachers share their workshop experiences with them, particularly those on gender issues. Parents appreciate that the community is included in the learning environment as some are being trained in information technology through the HEART Trust, using the school's computer lab.

Parents state that their greatest contribution lies in maintaining the cleanliness and attractiveness of the school. They also help in the school feeding programme and make donations to the school.

**Respondents' Recommendations:**

USAID should:

Continue the literacy and numeracy initiative

Provide skills training for parents

**EXPANDING EDUCATIONAL HORIZONS EVALUATION  
SCHOOL VISIT REPORT SEPTEMBER '08**

**School:** Polly Ground Primary  
**Date:** '08 September 12  
**Region:** 4

**Enrollment:** 600  
**Parish:** St. Catherine

**Contacts: 8 adults, affiliations listed below**

<b>POSITIONS</b>
<b>Principal</b>
<b>Board member, staff representative</b>
<b>PTA, member of Planning Committee</b>
<b>Parent, President of Planning Committee</b>
<b>Resource Teacher</b>
<b>Resource Teacher</b>
<b>Resource Teacher</b>
<b>Resource Teacher</b>

**Students Interviewed: four students in grade 3.**

**Background:**

Polly Ground Primary is a graduated school located in a small rural community approximately seven kilometers from Ewarton. The school has recorded steady improvement in enrollment figures, moving from under 150 pupils five years ago to the present figure. The population includes 100 only from the immediate community as parents from as far away as twenty-five kilometers have sought entry for their children. This year the school has had to refuse enrollment to approximately 112 children even though five new classrooms had been added recently by the MOE through the ETT. The school plant is made up of single storey concrete structures supplemented by one shipping container that houses the resource room and two tents used as classrooms.

Polly ground has embarked on several innovations to improve student performance. These include having selected grades in single gender classrooms, a mentorship programme for boys, and employment of male staff to engage in the mentoring and instructional processes. The school interfaces with the various MOE initiatives and appear to harmonize them for student growth and development.

**School Improvement Plan:**

The creation of a school development plan is an integral part of the school's processes and procedures. Teachers are required to set their individual targets based on the school's plan. The creation of the SIP is a team effort. The plan is used a tool for setting goals, monitoring progress and gauging achievement. The use of JSAS is also integral to Polly ground's monitoring and evaluation processes.



**Training:**

The principal and staff of Polly ground highlighted the benefits of the training they received under EEH. The principal has involved at least six teachers to the resource teacher training experiences. Teachers state that they relish the collegial interaction at the workshops as well as the new strategies they are exposed to.

The Polly ground teachers state that their colleague teachers are receptive to their in house workshops and additional assistance. However time available is a major deterrent to their effective functioning since there is no release time for resource teachers.

**Materials:**

Teachers listed the materials they received from USAID including Math software – Math Amigo, Digital storytelling tools, laptops, Overhead Projectors, Multimedia projectors, activity booklets, instructional booklets were very clear you can take these up and follow instructions and create. They underscored the usefulness of these materials by stating that they all served their purpose depending on the lesson. They were also impressed with how children interacted with the software.

**Impact of EEH on School and Community:**

The one-on-one interface by subject specialists with the teachers and the expanded use of JSAS are seen as having greatest impact. The effect of this quality support was evident at the recent summer conference where teachers from EEH schools led the discussions and shared their knowledge and experiences.

**Partnerships:**

The environment for partnerships is positive and the local community has also strengthened its capacity to support the school, for example, a recent School Uniform Party involving parents, teachers and the wider community brought J\$140,000 to the school. The principal reports sending out several grant proposals and positive responses resulted in two grants to purchase and refurbish the shipping container. The school has one traditional partnership with the nearby bauxite company. Past Peace Corp Volunteers at the school fund raise overseas to support the Polly Ground Scholarship Fund that gives bursaries to the five top performing students in the GSAT examinations. Support has come also from local banks and the community action committee.

Three years ago, the board and the PTA agreed that members should contribute J\$1,500 annually to the school and these funds are used for various school improvement purposes.

**School Board:**

The board's goal was to build the reputation of the school in the context of concerns about the level of student performance, low attendance rates and a history of pupils moving to higher status schools once their performance improved. The principal reports that the board helped to shape the direction and vision of the school and found ways to motivate the teachers. The respondent credits NHP and EEH with helping to build the reputation of the school by the quality of administrative and teacher training interventions provided.

**Parents and Community:**

Approximately 300 parents attend the first PTA meeting of the school year. The principal states that the school has a committed group of parents. Parents have undertaken several activities during the school year, including a prayer breakfast to raise funds for the school and Cultural Day celebrations. They state that their most important contribution to the school has been their support of the teachers and their children's education.

**Respondents' Recommendations:**

USAID should:

Conduct seminars with board chairmen on project goals as they represent their schools to potential partners

Give continued support to project schools

Provide scholarships to younger principals to strengthen the knowledge base in the system

Provide more training in parenting skills

Assist the MOE to scale-up EEH initiatives

**EXPANDING EDUCATIONAL HORIZONS PROJECT EVALUATION  
SITE VISIT REPORT –SEPTEMBER 2008**

**School:** Anchovy Primary  
**Date:** September 11, 2008  
**Region:** 4

**Enrollment:** 1070  
**Parish:** St. James

**Contacts: 10 adults, affiliations listed below**

<b>Position</b>
<b>Principal</b>
<b>Board Chairman</b>
<b>Resource Teacher</b>
<b>Resource Teacher</b>
<b>Teacher</b>
<b>Resource Teacher</b>
<b>PTA President</b>
<b>PTA, Vice-President</b>
<b>Parent</b>
<b>Parent</b>

**Students Interviewed: 5 students total; one student in grade 2, one student in grade 3, one student in grade 4, and 2 students in grade 6.**

**Background:**

Anchovy Primary school is located seven miles south of Montego Bay in St. James. The school is located in a modern (about ten years old) two storey building built to form a quadrangle on a relatively small lot of land. Thirty-one members (including the principal and guidance counselor) serve the student population of 1070. The community served by the school comprises mostly low income families.

Anchovy was assigned Professional Development Center (PDC) status under NHP. The principal highlights work with other schools and the MOE as a dominant feature of school achievements. Teachers are noted to embrace more student centered approaches to instruction. Teachers from the school have been selected to conduct professional development workshops sessions with EEH as well as in other MOE initiatives.

One feature of the school is the ownership of a public address system which (on the day of observation) plays gospel music throughout the school day. The volume of the music is turned up during breaks. The principal also makes announcements on the PA system.

The principal spoke highly of the EEH project (alongside NHP) and credits it for a large part of his professional growth and success as a school leader. Both teachers and principal spoke highly of the training they received on the project and their abilities to translate the training to their everyday professional activities.

Students spoke highly of the competencies of their teachers and the strategies they used to teach. They were able to articulate some of the strategies used in class as well as information about EEH.

Gender concerns were also highlighted by respondents. The underperformance of boys was a concern and measures to address this included the “equal treatment” of boys in classes as well as boys day and other social interventions.

**School Improvement Plan:**

The school improvement plan is cited as an integral part of the schools development process. It provided details of school attainment targets and the strategies for achieving these. It also provides a profile of the anchovy student. An inventory of leadership in terms of student body, PTA school administration is also a feature of the plan. The plan is used for projecting improvement on the physical plant. It guides teachers how to use technology in teaching. The plan is also seen as an instructive tool for supervisory visits from the MOE.

**Training:**

Anchovy is making the transition from becoming trainees to becoming trainers. Teachers and principal who received training have engaged in conducting training activities at the various levels of the system. The training from EEH has received high marks from principal and teachers. Their engagement in training activities has also been noted to build their self-efficacy as education professionals.

**Materials:**

Respondents listed the materials they received from USAID including Laptop Computer, multimedia projector, boom box, Alphasmart, digital camera, Television, Books and others. As with other schools there is little distinction between materials acquired under EEH and NHP. Teachers have high praise for the materials they receive and rate them as extremely useful. As a PDC the school hosts a computer lab and other technological resources.

**Partnerships:**

Businesses in such rural communities are small and unable to respond to requests for support from the school. Anchovy Primary has to compete with other schools for support from bigger businesses in Montego Bay. The school has one donor who is considered a partner and has had occasional past student support and “one-off” contributions from three companies in Montego Bay. The partner is an overseas group that gives donations and has helped the school to make links with the United States based Urban Farming project, leading to successes in 4-H Club competitions.

A grant proposal resulted in a donation of a used computer that was photographed and reported in the local newspaper as “donation of a computer lab”. This incident points to a possible need for a system of appraising partnerships. However, the principal believes that it is through grant writing that the school will attract partnerships.

**School Board:**

The school has a very active and supportive board that meets regularly once each term. The board’s need is for the school to function harmoniously and members support principal, teachers,

students and parents by creating a collaborative and encouraging environment. The board believes that EEH has enhanced educational delivery and student performance in the school.

**Parent and Community Involvement:**

PTA meetings are monthly and about 250 parents usually attend. Speakers are invited to inform parents on issues such as drug abuse, financial management and parenting skills. Parents are significant supporters of the school contributing services and materials such as seed for the 4-H Club. Their most significant effort is the donation of the PA system. Parents praise EEH for the wide range of resources to which their children are exposed and the positive impact it has had on all the stakeholders in the school.

Parents would like EEH or a future project to provide parenting skills training.

**EXPANDING EDUCATIONAL HORIZONS PROJECT EVALUATION  
SITE VISIT REPORT –SEPTEMBER 2008**

**School:** Bull Bay All Age  
**Date:** September 17, 2008  
**Region:** 1

**Enrollment:** not provided  
**Parish:** St. Thomas

**Contacts: 4 adults, affiliations listed below**

<b>Position</b>
<b>Senior Teacher</b>
<b>Teacher</b>
<b>Teacher</b>
<b>Teacher</b>

**Background:**

Bull bay All Age School is located approximately twelve miles east of Kingston at the border of the parishes of St. Thomas and St. Andrew. It is located in a community with residents of lower socio economic status in an area plagued with violence and other antisocial behaviors.

While the Bull Bay (like other schools) has been on the EEH project and the NHP, our visit revealed little or no impact of the project. The school faces a decline in population with approximately twenty new students registering for the current academic year. The school is also experiencing deteriorating physical conditions including degradation of the road and landscape.

On our scheduled visit to the school, we learned that school was dismissed at lunchtime due to the lack of potable water. The principal was also absent. However, we spoke with four teachers (including the only senior teacher on staff) who seemed very tentative in their responses.

The teachers, while being aware of EEH, were not able to say much about the project since they said it was not being implemented in their school. They cited lack of communication and coordination from school administration as the reason for non involvement in the project.

Teachers mentioned that girls outperformed boys academically at the school. They blamed this on indiscipline, lack of interest and poor attendance on the part of the boys. Apart from a boys day that was held once in the past five years, teachers were unable to cite any other interventions that were designed address the needs of boys.

**School Improvement Plan:**

Teachers were unable to identify with a school improvement plan.

**Training:**

The resource teacher system does not function in Bull Bay. No teacher has consistently attended the training workshops held by EEH. Teachers' attendance seemed to be entirely dependent on their availability. No other criteria for attendance were mentioned. When asked about school workshops for the sharing of project ideas teachers recalled a staff member resigned four years

ago as the last person who consistently engaged in training sessions. There was also mention of EEH staff who held site based and Cluster workshop for teachers.

**Materials:**

Teachers were able to name the technological aids received from the project as well as books. However they spoke of inadequate materials distribution processes within the school. Inadequate storage and theft of equipment were also cited as problems.

**Partnerships:**

The senior teacher knew of only one partner of the school. That partner has a history of supporting the school, mainly in the area of general maintenance.

**School Board:**

The senior teacher was unaware of any board meeting being held in recent times. The vice-chairman visits but remains in the principal's office.

**Parent and Community Involvement:**

PTA meeting are held once per month. The average attendance is 15 parents.





**Impact of EEH on School and Community:**

The principal credited EEH for improved teaching and learning in literacy and numeracy. The principal had high praises for the EEH project in terms of staff training and impact on student performance in national examinations. She spoke of the placement of some students in traditional high schools as one significant achievement.

**Training:**

The teacher respondents expressed concern that EEH was brought additional responsibilities which were sometimes unwieldy. There seemed to be a significant disconnect between the teachers' perception of the project and the principals' description. However, it was evident that training sessions by resource teachers as well as EEH clinical supervisory visits were a feature of the schools activities. Teachers were also concerned about the demands placed on them by the different projects and agencies. They proffered that too many stakeholders were making demands on teachers who sometimes found this burdensome.

**School Improvement Plan:**

The principal underscored the integral role of the school improvement plan in the schools development processed. The plan is viewed as providing a snapshot of the school environment as well as a blueprint for improvement processes.

**Materials:**

Teacher respondents while acknowledging some resources received from EEH expressed the need for more. For example they suggested the allocation of a laptop computer for each teacher so that students could benefit form the use of this technology in all classes.

**Partnerships:**

There is a clear potential for partnerships with private sector in the greater Negril community. The principal has compiled a list of 47 potential partners from the greater Negril area, but has not yet sent out proposals. Support has come in from an international NGO, past students, occasional tourists and one hotel which is considered to be the school's main partner. The grades 1-3 buildings and the land on which they are situated are leased to the school at a per annum rate of J\$10,000.

**Parent support:**

The PTA is very active and in general parents have a strong desire for the school and community to succeed. They are involved in maintenance of the school buildings, classroom and other types of construction, farming projects and occasional classroom assistance. The principal has not put a monetary value on this form of support but admits that parent support represents a substantial contribution.

**School Board:**

The board meets once per term. They identify strengths and weaknesses in the school and generally encourage and motivate teachers and students.

**Respondents' Recommendations:**

USAID should continue EEH and include other schools that need the help.  
Remove the duality of marking registers as well as using JSAS – stick to a single method of record keeping  
Get reading specialists not to assess teachers but to assess children  
Children must be psychologically tested  
Address early childhood education  
Get up to date materials to integrate with the curriculum.  
Participate in literacy 4-5-6



set classroom goals based on the SIP. The principal emphasized that the SIP reminded them of their needs and the necessary steps to realize their goals.

**Training:**

Teachers and principal expressed appreciation for the training received under EEH. The teachers commended the practical instructional suggestions given as well as the hands-on activity component. In addition, other teachers benefitted from site based workshops conducted by the EEH staff.

**Materials:**

Participants acknowledged materials they received from EEH/USAID including Laptop Computer, multimedia projector, boom box, Alpha smart, digital camera, Television, Books and others.

**Impact of EEH on School and Community:**

Those interviewed report that EEH has made a huge difference to the school. They are proud of the improvements in literacy as the school achieved 78% mastery at first sitting, moving from 26% four years ago. The impact of technology on teaching and learning is seen as significant, as is teacher training. Teachers have become more motivated and confident professionals. The strategy to seek partners to help fund the school received high praise. NHP and EEH are seen as the only projects to keep the school focused on raising standards and staying on goal.

**Partnerships:**

The environment for partnerships is vibrant and strong. The most significant partnership is Jamaica Self Help out of Canada, resulting in financial assistance for several interventions including paying the salary of a full-time social worker. The principal sees this partnership as on-going.

Other partners give further assistance with the breakfast programme that feeds 70 -80 pupils daily and paying the salary of a library assistant. Proposals have been written for partners to help build a lunch area for pupils. Island Networks has also provided connectivity for the school. However, the school could get more help from the local business community.

**School Board:**

The chairman is a Roman Catholic priest. The board meets once per term and maintains an excellent relationship with the school. Members expect improved academic performance of pupils, professional development of teachers, greater parental involvement in their children's education and stakeholder involvement in the school. Through the chairman, the board has attracted partnerships, and other members assist in school activities and help to encourage and motivate teachers and children.

**Parent Support:**

PTA meetings are held once per term and when necessary along with other consultations on a grade basis. The school tries to disseminate information to parents and make them integral to the school. Now fewer school reports are being left in the office. Most parents want their children to excel but they don't know how to help them.

Some parents are able to help their children with their school work because they assist in school activities, for example, on teachers' day parents become the teachers in all the classes.

**Recommendations for Improvement:**

Interviewees recommend that for the next 15 months there should be (a) more emphasis on teacher training to teach mathematics (b) parenting education (c) continued teacher training and, (d) assistance with the breakfast programme.

Transfer of EEH initiatives into the educational system

The cascading concept should be used to implement scale-up. All Education Officers would need to be trained in EEH initiatives for effective monitoring. Schools could be evaluated on the basis of the training they give to other schools.

The challenge to the cascade concept is the availability of resources such as the computer lab and other teaching tools. Without EEH, St. Anne's would not have got such equipment.

**EXPANDING EDUCATIONAL HORIZONS EVALUATION  
SCHOOL SITE VISIT REPORT SEPTEMBER '08**

**School:** Drew Avenue Primary & Infant  
**Date:** September 15, 2008  
**Region:** 1

**Enrollment:** 520+  
**Parish:** St. Andrew

**Contacts: 12 adults, affiliations listed below.**

<b>POSITIONS</b>
<b>Principal</b>
<b>Vice-Principal</b>
<b>Board member – Teacher representative</b>
<b>Teacher</b>
<b>Teacher</b>
<b>Teacher</b>
<b>Teacher</b>
<b>Teacher</b>
<b>PTA past president</b>
<b>Parent of grade 4 child</b>
<b>Parent of grade 3 child</b>
<b>Parent of grade 4 child</b>

**Students Interviewed: 11 students, all in grade 3.**

**Background:**

Drews Avenue Primary and Infant is a government owned school located just off one of the city's highways. It is situated in a politically volatile area and the grade of the school has moved from 5 to 3 based on population figures because families move away when there are flare-ups. Families are slowly moving back into the community after problems last school year. The school is in a low socio-economic area and parents rely heavily on the school's breakfast programme for their children's food and nutrition needs, but the school can help only 10% of the 80% who require assistance. The school is yet to graduate as literacy is a problem.

The school has not graduated from the EEH project and the principal cites fluctuation in literacy scores as well as poverty as chief mitigating factors in meeting graduation criteria. Performance in terms of gender is a feature of Drews avenue (girls outperforming boys). Different socialization practices by parents are cited as a possible reason for this.

The principal spoke highly of the training offered to her staff by the EEH project. She also spoke of the resources that the school could not afford under the normal government programme. Teachers were also very positive about the workshops they attended and the support offered by the specialists on site visits to the school.

While the students did not explicitly state what strategies their teachers used to teach literacy and numeracy. They alluded to the patience and care that their teachers took in interacting with them in the school setting.

**School Improvement Plan:**

The school improvement plan is described as a product of collaborative work. Teachers and administrators participate in the development process. The principal describes Drews Avenue as the number one school for JSAS. She indicates that her school has played an active role in orienting and supporting other schools in the use of the software.

**Training:**

Teachers described the training as most meaningful was at their school where staff development sessions were held. The approach of the technology specialist was commended for the hands on experiences provided during training.

**Materials:**

Participants expressed appreciation for the materials they received.

**Impact of EEH on School and Community:**

The principal believes that teacher training and the resources provided under EEH have made the greatest impact along with “opening our minds to possibilities” which made the school realize that partnership is not begging. Teachers and students have become more confident using technology in teaching and learning.

**Partnerships:**

Established businesses give tremendous support to the school but smaller companies are unwilling. Partnerships exist with the nearby Anglican Church whose priest is the school’s board chairman, a service club, two big businesses, one smaller local company, an NGO and individuals. These provide support programs and give supplies as the needs arise. All partnerships came as a result of NHP and EEH training. There is a plan to market the school focusing on past students who have migrated or attained some prominence in the society in order to attract more partners.

**School Board:**

The Board includes prominent persons, three of whom have connections with businesses that partner with the school. The board believes that the school should cater to the whole person and while EEH aims to fill the academic needs, so long as 80% of families rely on the school to feed their children, the project will have no great impact.

**Parent Support:**

Parents are more open to communication with them and now understand better their role in their children’s learning. Parents started the breakfast program and formed a group to keep it going. They feed up to sixty of those most in need and participate in some school activities.

**Recommendations to USAID for the next 15 months:**

(1) Provide assistance with nutritional needs (2) Expose other teachers of the school directly to EEH seminars and workshops so that they can receive information first-hand and become more inspired. (3) Provide more strategies and tools for boys' education (4) Provide strategies to build self esteem and values and attitudes (5) return to a programme of parenting education.

**Future Education Projects:**

(1) USAID should continue its focus on literacy and numeracy along with technology. (2) The nutrition programme begun under NHP should be retained (3) Gender education should continue but with more emphasis on strategies on how to teach boys in a female dominated environment.

How to transfer EEH initiatives in the educational system:

The best initiatives of EEH should be transferred through seminars and cluster workshops some of which are: public/private sector partnership, teacher training and teamwork.



**EXPANDING EDUCATIONAL HORIZONS PROJECT EVALUATION  
SITE VISIT REPORT –SEPTEMBER 2008**

**School:** St. Michael's Primary

**Date:** September 17, 2008

**Region:** 1

**Enrollment:** 217 (137 boys 80 girls)

**Parish:** Kingston

**Contacts: 5 adults, affiliations listed below**

<b>Position</b>
<b>Principal</b>
<b>Board representative</b>
<b>Resource Teacher</b>
<b>Resource Teacher</b>
<b>PTA president</b>

**Students Interviewed: 4 students, all in grade 3.**

**Background:**

St. Michael's Primary is located next to a high security adult correctional facility in the heart of southern Kingston. Students are accommodated in a large under populated two storey building which is fairly well maintained and securely bounded by high wall fences. There are eight teachers on staff. The school also houses a special education department.

The school is located in the heart of a volatile inner-city community where many parents are deemed unemployed and unemployable. The principal has noted recent improvement in enrollment and student performance. The school which has been on a USAID project for almost ten years has benefited from infusions of training, resources and other support. However, progress has been slow in terms of meeting graduation criteria.

The principal cites the infusion of technology by EEH as a timely and highly valued intervention. He cites it as an incentive to many students to participate in the teaching learning activities at the school.

Students indicated that their teacher encouraged and modeled reading in the classroom. They were appreciative of their teachers mode of interaction with them. There was a notable absence of involvement in clubs and other extra-curricular activities – in fact students interviewed were not aware of the existence of any such clubs at their school.

**School Improvement Plan:**

St. Michael's has developed their school improvement plan which speaks about their mission and our vision to our motto and school thought, background and targets. The plan mentions all the drawbacks (e.g., the school's location next to a prison).

**Training:**

Teachers were generally positive about training whoever they were concerned that at the residential workshops but there was too much to cover in too little time. They expressed the need for more site based training sessions where project staff presented in their schools.

**Materials:**

St. Michael's has benefitted from similar material infusions as other schools. However, the teacher in charge speaks of his colleagues' reluctance to use the technological tools. This he notes as a challenge which has taken too long to be resolved.

**Impact of EEH on School and Community:**

EEH has brought out children's ability to use technology to assist their learning, taught school administration how to identify partners for the school and to understand that submitting a grant proposal is not the same as begging.

**Partnerships:**

The environment for partnerships is positive. The school's breakfast programme feeds 50 pupils and is fully sponsored by two local companies. Five other partners donate textbooks and sponsor social events. In-kind contributions come from a past student who lives abroad. The most significant partner is the Bank of Jamaica which for the past five years has sponsored to summer school 60-90 students who usually would not be able to attend. The children are given materials, lunch and sent on field trips.

**School Board:**

The board would like to see increased attendance rates, improved performance levels of students and more parental involvement in the school. Towards this end, in addition to regular meetings, members meet with the staff to discuss challenges and ways to overcome them. The respondent has not observed any real improvements under EEH, citing poor attendance rates and community disruptions as reasons.

**Parent and Community Support:**

Respondents agree that parent support for the PTA is weak, averaging 20-25% attendance. To encourage higher levels of attendance, the school seeks sponsorship to provide refreshments and musical entertainment. The PTA executive tries to encourage parents to support the efforts of the school by giving them tips on parenting.

**Respondents' Recommendations:**

USAID should:

Provide skill training for parents and community members

Continue its work on the two core interventions of literacy and numeracy

Provide more training on cooperative teaching/learning strategies

Provide social workers to support children with challenges that teachers are not trained to handle

**EXPANDING EDUCATIONAL HORIZONS PROJECT EVALUATION  
SITE VISIT REPORT –SEPTEMBER 2008**

**School:** Bickersteth Primary and Infant

**Date:** September 11, 2008

**Region:** 4

**Enrollment:** 487 + 60 (infants)

**Parish:** St. James

**Contacts: 7 adults, affiliations listed below**

<b>Position</b>
<b>Principal</b>
<b>Board Member</b>
<b>Resource Teacher</b>
<b>Resource Teacher</b>
<b>Resource Teacher</b>
<b>PTA Asst. Treasurer</b>
<b>Partner</b>

**Students Interviewed: 7 total; three students in grade 4, one student in grade 5, and three students in grade 6.**

**Background:**

Bickersteth Primary and infant school is located in the rural community of Bickersteth in St. James about 10 miles south of Montego Bay. The community served by the school comprises small farmers and other laborers. The unemployment rate is high in the community. The school has experienced steady growth in student population since its participation in USAID projects. School hours are 8:30 am to 2:45 pm. Sixteen teachers are employed to the school while thirteen serve grades one to six, including a total of five resource teachers.

Bickersteth is noted for its thriving infant department and the emphasis on transitions from infant to primary levels. While there have been significant strides in the size quality of the accommodation over the past five years, the school leadership has emphasized the need for additional accommodation to adequately house the burgeoning student population. This is significant since the schools enrollment quota is now oversubscribed compared to low enrollment prior to USAID intervention.

The school, which is located on a hilly terrain in the interior of Western Jamaica, has four modestly sized buildings of differing ages. One block hosts the infant department while the others host the primary classrooms, the principal's office and an area earmarked for a resource/technology center. A floor with three classrooms built on top of an existing structure (USAID funded) is the most recent addition to the school infrastructure.

Interviews with the principal and teachers highlighted appreciation of EEH and USAID inputs. The principal cited close collaboration with a neighboring EEH school as one source of development for the school and its teachers. Teachers also highlighted the training they received as well as the materials from EEH as positive factors in their professional development and their teaching activities.

Students cited the teachers' interest in their learning as well as their patience in promoting their understanding of literacy and numeracy concepts as positives in their school environment. They were also able to provide a brief explanation of EEH and its place in their school.

**School Improvement Plan:**

The school improvement plan for the year 2008 was not yet complete. However, the principal spoke of the usefulness of the document. The process of school improvement planning at Bickersteth involves input from teachers, principal and other representatives. This is also used as a guide for teachers' goal setting.

**Training:**

EEH Resource Teachers and their principal received training from the project in national workshops. In addition, other teachers benefitted from site based workshops conducted by the EEH staff. The resource teachers spoke positively about the training they received and of its value to their classroom practice.

**Materials:**

Respondents listed the materials they received from USAID including Laptop Computer, multimedia projector, boom box, Alpha smart, digital camera, Television, Books and others. As with other schools there is little distinction between materials acquired under EEH and NHP. There is a computer which is loaded with the JSAS software and is used for up-to date record keeping on student and staff related matters.

**Partnerships:**

The principal admits that he needs to begin developing proposals and is confident that he'll be able to attract support through personal relationships with, for example, a bank manager in Montego Bay. He has received computers and other in-kind donations from political figures in the area and hopes to help revive the overseas alumni, which has made contributions in the past. The partner gives ongoing assistance, largely maintenance and refurbishing of the school.

**Parent and Community Support:**

A few parents act as teachers' aides and support parents' workdays. The best parent/community contribution is the breakfast programme, which is completely voluntary and carried over from NHP. They also put on two main annual events the proceeds from which have been used to purchase a photocopier and a public address system. Parents also have an input in 4-H activities of the school.

**Respondents' Recommendations:**

Over the next 15 months, EEH should continue to do what it has been doing. Future projects should include parent training

## **ANNEX 5: Contacts Information**

### Contacts Information<sup>20</sup>

#### **USAID**

Karen Hilliard, Director  
Ken Lyvers, Director, Office of Sustainable Development  
Sean Osner, Deputy Director, OSD  
Claire Spence, Program Management Specialist (Education) and CTO, EEH Project  
Yvonne Coore-Johnson, Program Management Specialist (C-CETT)  
Sasha Parke, Program Management Specialist (Democracy & Governance)  
Jennifer Knight-Johnson, Program Management Specialist (Health)

#### **GOJ**

Barbara Allen, Acting Permanent Secretary, MOE  
Jasper Lawrence, Chief Education Officer, MOE  
Salomie Evering, DCEO, MOE  
Ruth Morris, Sr. Director, Human Resources Modernization, MOE  
Frank Weeple, Director, ETT, MOE  
Sonia Cunningham, Work Stream Leader, ETT  
Tamika Benjamin, National Mathematics Coordinator, ETT  
Winsome Gordon, Director, Jamaica Teaching Council  
Rebecca Tortello, Assistant to the Minister of Education and ex-EEH Staff Member  
Errol Levy, Deputy CEO, MOE, Region 1  
Evadne Small, TEO, MOE, Region 1  
Mr. Eric Coote, TEO, MOE, Region 4  
Miss Patricia Perry, TEO, MOE, Region 6  
Don Clayton, Technology Officer, MOE/PESP  
Beatrice Wilson, Math Section, CCU, MOE  
Lorna Thompson, Math Section, CCU, MOE  
Seymour Hamilton, Math Section, CCU, MOE  
Daphne Simon, Language Arts, SEO, MOE  
Sophia Hall, Language Arts, SEO, MOE  
Novlette Francis, Language Arts, SEO, MOE  
Merris Murray, Executive Director, The Early Childhood Commission  
Barbara Hew, Social Sector Projects, Ministry of Finance  
Saskia Frater-Smith, Project Economist, PIOJ  
Steven Kerr, Manager, Human Development, PIOJ

#### **PIU**

Jean Beaumont, Chief of Party/Project Director  
Oniece Grant, Deputy Director and Senior Project Accountant  
Pauline Jones-Scott, Project Accountant  
Andrea Rattray, Project Administrator

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<sup>20</sup> Does not include contacts in the 12 school visits; see Annex 4 for this information.

Valda Brown, Secretary  
Nika Duncan-Donaldson, School Management Team Coordinator  
Simone Bullock, School Management Specialist  
Andrea Pinnock, Educational Technology Specialist  
Melody Williams, Educational Technology Specialist  
David Morgan, Numeracy Specialist  
Derrick Hall, Numeracy Specialist  
Paulette Roberts, Literacy Specialist  
Maureen Byfield, Literacy specialists  
Jodi Grant, Literacy Consultant  
Barbara Bailey, Gender Consultant  
Ceva McPherson, Numeracy Consultant  
Michael Gonzales, Public Relations Consultant  
Doreen Faulkner, Monitoring and Evaluation Consultant  
Grace Christie, Gender Consultant  
Sheryl Brown, Public/Private Partnerships Consultant  
Ricardo Donaldson, School Management Consultant

**Stakeholders/Partners**

Saffrey Brown, Gen. Mgr., JNBS Foundation and Executive Director of Partner Jamaica  
Claudette Richardson-Pious, Executive Director, Children First  
Peter Rose, Ex-Executive Director, Partner Jamaica  
Andrew Massias, CEO, Island Networks Ltd.  
Mark McKenzie, Chairman, PSOJ, Sub-Committee on Education  
Ian Gottesman, President, Friends of Jamaica  
Robert Neish, Executive Director, Digicel Foundation  
Elsa Leo-Rhynie, Chair, Grace Kennedy Foundation  
Asha Bobb-Semple, Programme Coordinator, Environmental Foundation of Jamaica  
Jacqueline Lynch-Stewart, Executive Director, Bob Marley Foundation  
Ms. Megan Lindo, Secretary, Jamaica Flour Mills Foundation

**Other**

Marcia Stewart, Administrator, JBTE  
Stafford Griffith, Director, C-CETT  
Jean Hastings, Director, PESP (IDB)  
Cecille Bernard, EEH Project Manager, PACT  
Hyacinth Evans, Institute of Education  
Verna Duncan, Education Specialist  
Karen Jackson, Principal St. Peter Claver School Kingston  
Veronique Lawrence, Head Teacher, Job's Hill School  
Rosalee Ramdon, Principal Rock River School  
Rose Norman, Principal Devon Pen School

## ANNEX 6: Aguirre Division of JBS International, Inc. Evaluation Work Plan

### Objectives

The A/JBS evaluation team's objectives are to review and validate the EEH primary education program's design and goals; assess the program's impact since its inception in 2005; measure the results achieved; determine the relative effectiveness of its inputs; and recommend future activities and best practices for follow-on and future Mission activities.

The team will also assess the extent to which key, successful elements of the EEH program might be expanded to non-treatment schools. This assessment will factor in the activities of other donors and significant programs, such as the IDB and C-CETT, as well as the policy, human resource, managerial, infrastructure, budget, and political environment for primary education development. The results will be communicated to and discussed with USAID and the Ministry of Education (MOE).

Special attention will be given to identifying successful practices for improving boys' educational performance, raising boys' literacy and numeracy, increasing the involvement of males in the Jamaican education sector, and developing more comprehensive community resources for boys' education, such as mentors and male role models.

Finally, the team will seek to identify and recommend effective approaches to increasing involvement of private sector and civil society groups in primary education activities in EEH schools and the larger school system. Possibilities include leveraging funds from local businesses and community development organizations to support primary schools and broadening engagement of parents, school boards, and local community leaders. U.S. and international businesses and non-profits may offer other possibilities.

### Methodology

#### Division of Labor

The wide array of activities required to meet these objectives will be assigned to team members based on their individual areas of expertise. The following table illustrates how each specific member fits into the overall evaluation plan.

Evaluation Activity	Lead Team Member
Analyzing the education sector institutional environment and its impact on the project, currently and prospectively.	COP
Examining the current and potential involvement of IDB and other education donors and programs and their potential for increased synergy with EEH and support for future primary education activities.	COP
Assessing the effectiveness of EEH project interventions in the schools and in involving and meeting the needs of different stakeholders, including students, teachers, parents, school boards, and communities.	ISEMS and CPES

Evaluation Activity	Lead Team Member
Exploring the impact of public-private partnerships in project schools, and how these partnerships might be expanded or improved both currently and prospectively.	CPES
Assessing the existing performance management plan and determining the effectiveness of the formative evaluations to date for ongoing measurement of project outcomes. Assisting the Team in identifying and analyzing other available EEH and MOE performance data for project schools.	EAS
Together with the ISEMS and the CPES, assessing project school management, including SIPs, JSAS, management styles, and use of feedback from the formative evaluation to improve future performance. Examining the cost-effectiveness of EEH interventions.	EAS
Contractor performance.	Full Evaluation Team
<b>COP</b> Evaluation Specialist/Chief of Party <b>ISEMS</b> Instructional Systems/Education Materials Specialist <b>CPES</b> Community Participation and Education Specialist <b>EAS</b> Education Administration Specialist	

Qualitative evaluation methods will be the primary means employed, including:

- Structured, in-depth interviews with project personnel, USAID staff (as appropriate), selected MOE staff, educators and educational experts at various levels, principals, teachers, students, parents, school board members, school partners, and community and business leaders.
- Structured school site visits to a selected sample of schools.
- Time permitting, one or more focus groups designed to further broaden the scope of stakeholders consulted and to help address critical EEH and general basic education issues raised by the team’s work.

### Schedule of Activities

The following table outlines the schedule for the team’s in-country activities from Sept. 1 to September 30, 2008. The final report is scheduled to be completed and submitted by Oct. 17, 2008. Deliverables are identified in bold-face type.

Table 4: Aguirre Schedule of Activities

Dates	Activities
<b>Week One</b>	
Sept. 1, 2008	COP arrives in country.



Sept. 1-5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ ISEMS and CPES begin Sept. 2.</li> <li>▪ EAS arrives in country Sept. 3.</li> <li>▪ Meetings/briefings with USAID, MOEY, contractor, etc.</li> <li>▪ <b>Finalize work plan.</b></li> <li>▪ <b>Finalize research design and methods.</b></li> <li>▪ <b>Develop school site visits sample and visit protocols.</b></li> <li>▪ Schedule site visits and inform schools.</li> <li>▪ Develop contacts lists and schedule appointments.</li> <li>▪ Initiate contacts with other donors and key programs.</li> <li>▪ Arrange team logistics.</li> </ul>
<b>Week Two</b>	
Sept. 8-9	Consultants collect data in their respective areas.
Sept. 10-12 Sept. 10-12 Sept. 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ISEMS and CPES initiate site visits.</li> <li>• COP and EAS continue data collection in their respective areas.</li> <li>▪ <b>Weekly USAID briefing - 8:00 AM.</b></li> </ul>
Sept. 13 (AM)	Team reviews first week's field work data and makes adjustments as needed.
<b>Week Three</b>	
Sept.15-18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ School site visits and other field work continue.</li> <li>▪ Possible focus group meeting on Jamaican education needs and opportunities.</li> </ul>
Sept. 19 Sept. 19-20	Data Analysis and report planning.
<b>Week Four</b>	
Sept. 21 Sept. 22-23	EAS departs CPES and EAS draft and deliver their reports to COP.
Sept.22 Sept. 22-25 Sept. 25	<b>Weekly USAID briefing – 8:00 AM</b> Tentative conclusions and recommendations shared with USAID. COP and ISEMS work on draft report. <b>Draft report delivered by COB to USAID.</b>
<b>Sept. 26</b> Sept. 26=27	<b>USAID Briefing – 8:00 AM</b> COP and ISEMS work on report appendices, acronyms, etc.
<b>Week Five</b>	
Sept. 29	Discuss draft report with USAID.
Sept. 29-30	Make changes as needed.
Sept. 30	<b>USAID and MOE final de-briefings.</b>

Oct. 1	COP departs.
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## **TEAM PROTOCOLS**

### **DONORS AND KEY OTHER PROJECTS INTERVIEW GUIDE**

Could you briefly describe for me your activities in education?

How have you collaborated with the EEH project?

Are you satisfied with the level of collaboration?

How do you view EEH in the context of major reforms and initiatives in the current education system?

How do you see possibilities for future collaboration with EEH

What has been the most successful aspect of the EEH?

What has been the most successful aspect of your education development work?

The EEH continues until the end of 2009 what recommendations would you make for improvement?

USAID is currently planning for its next strategy period in terms of focus and projects for the next five years. What advice would you give them in terms of what a follow-up project for educational improvement should entail?

Would you like to add any final recommendations or closing thoughts?

### **EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT ENVIRONMENT GUIDE**

Could you give me some information on your current position and activities?

Have you heard about the EEH project?

How does your work relate to the project?

How have you collaborated with the EEH project?

How do you view EEH in the context of major reforms and initiatives in the current education system?

How do you see possibilities for future collaboration with EEH

What has been the most successful aspect of the EEH?

What has been the most successful aspect of your organization or project?

The EEH continues until the end of 2009; what recommendations would you make for improvement?

USAID is currently planning for its strategy period in terms of focus and projects for the next five years. What advice would you give them in terms of what a follow-up or new project for educational improvement should entail?

Would you like to add any final recommendations or closing thoughts?

### **EEH Evaluation School Visit Protocol and Allocation of Tasks**

Purpose: To assess the effectiveness of EEH project interventions in the schools and in involving and meeting the needs of different stakeholders, including students, teachers, parents, school boards, and communities.

#### Activities

Principal interviews, Resource teacher interviews, Classroom Observations, PTA representatives, school board members, Students, Public/Private Sector Partner(s)

Each school visit should last for approximately 2 ½ - 3 hours.

Activity	Responsibility
Principal Interviews	Lambert/Marshall
Resource teacher (or classroom teacher) interviews	Lambert
Student Interviews (focus group)	Lambert
Classroom Observations	Lambert
PTA interviews	Marshall <sup>21</sup>
School Board Interviews	Marshall
Private sector Partner(s)	Marshall

#### Proposed Schedule

1. Principal Interview 30 minutes
2. (a) Classroom Observation (Lambert) – 40 Minutes

<sup>21</sup> Will also ask questions related to ISEMS concerns

- (b) Private sector interview (Marshall)
- 3. (a) Teacher interview (Lambert) – 30 minutes  
(b) PTA interview (Marshall)
- 4. (a) Student interview (Lambert) – 30 Minutes  
(b) School Board interview (Marshall)

### **Interview Guide - Students Grades 1-4**

#### **BASIC INFORMATION**

**Date:**

<b>Name(s):</b>	<b>Grade</b>

**Location:**

#### **Interview Objectives and Issues/Themes to be Addressed:**

- Positives about their school/classes
- Feedback on strategies used to teach math and reading
- Feedback on materials including technology
- Knowledge of EEH
- How teacher teaches/treats boys vs. girls
- clubs/activities and participation by boys and girls
- parents' involvement in schools and help at home, (e.g. homework)

#### **Interview Schedule Ministry of Education or Project Partner**

**Interviewee(s):**

**Organization:**

**Interviewer:**

**Location:**

**Date:**

***Duration:***

- Could you please tell us about your affiliation with MOE and in what capacity? (Similar question to be used for non-MOE partners, as relevant)
- How have you collaborated with the EEH project?
- Are you satisfied with the level of collaboration?
- How do you view EEH in the context of major reforms and initiatives in the current education system?
- How do you see possibilities for future collaboration with EEH
- (If applicable) What has been the most successful aspect of the EEH?
- What has been the most successful aspect of your portfolio or project?
  
- The EEH continues until the end of 2009 what recommendations would you make for improvement?
- USAID is currently planning for its next strategy period in terms of focus and projects for the next five years. What advice would you give them in terms of what a follow-up project for educational improvement should entail?
- Would you like to add any final recommendations or closing thoughts?

### **Interview Schedule EEH PIU Staff**

**Interviewee(s):**

**Organization: EEH**

**Interviewer:**

**Time:**

**Location:**

**Date:**

***Duration:***

- Could you please tell us how long you have been with EEH and in what capacity?

- Tell me about your role in the project
- In your area of specialization, in what specific areas has USAID funding had the greatest impact within the EEH?
- What, in your opinion, have been key interventions in the project?
  - Why do you believe they were key?
  - What was their impact?
- Please talk about how you operate with other initiatives (e.g. CCETT. Literacy 1-2-3)
- On a scale of 1-5 (1 being the lowest & 5 the highest), please tell us how you would rank your intervention in terms of:

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>1-5 Ranking</b>	<b>Why</b>
<b>Effectiveness</b>		
<b>Synergy between project interventions in terms of their contributions and impact on improving literacy and numeracy among children</b>		
<b>Reliability / transferability to non project schools</b>		
<b><i>Responsiveness to the current trends in the Jamaican education system</i></b>		

- What has been the result of such a performance?
- Please talk about the overall technical support that your component has provided this project? What did it look like?
  - What have been the results of the PIU’s technical support?

- In what ways have you collaborated with the MOE to implement this programme?
- What has been the most successful aspect of this project?
- What has been the least successful aspect of this project?
- What recommendations would you make for improving EEH for the remainder of the project?
- What recommendations would you make for a follow-on project?
- Would you like to add any final recommendations or closing thoughts?

## **EEH EVALUATION GENERIC INTERVIEW REPORT FORM**

### **Basic Information**

**Date:**

**Name(s) and Title(s):**

**Organization:**

**Relationships to EEH:**

**Interviewer(s)**

**Location:**

**Duration:**

**Interview Objectives and Issues/Themes to be Addressed:**

**Key Information Obtained:**

**Interviewer Comments**

**Interview Guide Education Transformation Team**

**BASIC INFORMATION**

**Date:**

**Name(s) and Title(s):**

**Relationships to EEH:**

**Location:**

**Interview Objectives and Issues/Themes to be Addressed:**

- ETT's role in transforming education
  
- ETT's views on and association with projects
- ETT's Views on EEH –
- Views on the next 15 months of EEH
  
- Gender – [namely underachievement of boys] and Education Transformation efforts
- Instructional Materials for Numeracy & Literacy
- ETT's Vision for the Modus operandi of projects in the future for facilitating transformation, including the Ministry of Education
- How to promote synergy among the various initiatives

**Interview Guide - Resource Teachers**

**Basic Information**

**Date:**

<b>Name(s):</b>	<b>Years as Teacher</b>	<b>Resource Teacher</b>

**Location:**

**Interview Objectives and Issues/Themes to be Addressed:**



- Positives about role as resource teacher
- Negatives about roles as research teachers
- Feedback on training
- Feedback on Instructional Materials for Numeracy & Literacy
- EEH Approach and support
- Work with other EEH schools
- Work with non-EEH schools
- Gender issues in classroom and EEH input
- Involvement with other MOE initiatives (e.g., Literacy 1-2-3)
- Suggestions for EEH emphasis over next 15 months
- The general strengths and weaknesses of other teachers at the school, problems with attendance or turnover, and how weaknesses and problems could be addressed.

### **Interview Schedule – Principals**

#### **Basic Information**

**Date:**

**Name(s) and Title(s):**

**Relationships to EEH:**

**Location:**

- As an EEH school what are you most proud of?
- Has your school graduated? Why or why not?
- What were some of the challenges you faced in implementing the project in your school?
- There have been other MOE initiatives that have affected your school since EEH (e.g., Literacy 1-2-3, Education Transformation). (a) How have these worked together to

benefit the development of your school? (b) How would you have liked to see them work together?

- What EEH interventions are you most impressed with? Why?
- What EEH interventions are you least impressed with? Why?
- Tell me about the gender concerns in your school (i.e. the issue of boys vs. girls' performance). Has EEH provided any support in dealing with these concerns? Please describe.
- How is the SIP used in your school? Could I (we) see examples?
- How is JSAS used in your school?
- How does your school interface with PTAs, school boards, and Regional Education Offices)
- What were some of the lessons learned from your experience with EEH?
- EEH will continue until the end of 2009. Are there any changes you would like to see in the project over that time?
- Your school has been on a USAID/GOJ project for almost ten years. If you were asked to advise the USAID on what to do in terms of improving achievement in Jamaican Primary schools over the next five years what advice would you give them?

### **Questions for PTA, School Board, Private Sector**

What is EEH doing to improve the numeracy and literacy levels in this school?

What are you most satisfied with?

What are you least satisfied with?

Do you have any suggestions to improve what EEH does in schools?

For Parents only: Have you or any other parent attended any training workshops at your school (e.g., in the use of computers)?

