Centers of Excellence for Teacher Training: A Summit of the Americas Initiative

Assessment of Teacher Training and Reading Instruction Needs and Capacities in Central America

FINAL DRAFT

BEPS

Basic Education and Policy Support (BEPS) Activity

CREATIVE ASSOCIATES INTERNATIONAL

IN COLLABORATION WITH

CARE, THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY, AND GROUNDWORK

Centers of Excellence for Teacher Training:
A Summit of the Americas Initiative

Assessment of Teacher Training and Reading Instruction Needs and Capacities in Central America

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Basic Education and Policy Support (BEPS) Activity
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ii

CONTENTS

PREFACE

The Basic Education and Policy Support Activity (BEPS), a five-year initiative sponsored by USAID's LAC/RSD-EHR division, is designed to improve the quality, effectiveness, and access to formal and nonformal basic education. As an indefinite quantity contract (IQC), BEPS operates through both core funds and USAID Mission buy-ins to provide both short- and long-term assistance to missions and regional bureaus.

BEPS focuses on several important program areas: basic education, educational policy analysis and reform, restorative and additive educational work in countries in crisis (presence and non-presence), and the alleviation of abusive child labor. Services to be provided include policy appraisals and assessments, training and institutional strengthening, and the design and implementation of pilot projects, feasibility studies, applied research studies, seminars/workshops, and evaluations. Under BEPS, USAID also will compile and disseminate results, lessons learned, and other generalizable information through electronic networks, training workshops, national conferences, quarterly and annual reports, publications, and other vehicles.

One of the buy-ins for the BEPS activity is the Improved Human Resource Policies Task Order, a task order funded by LAC/RSD-EHR that provides technical assistance in basic education to USAID's Latin America and Caribbean (LAC) region. Helping to launch President George Bush's Centers of Excellence in Teacher Training initiative is one of the subtasks under that task order.

This assessment report was prepared as an input for USAID in the early conceptual, developmental stages of the Central America and Dominican Republic Centers of Excellence for Teacher Training. The recommendations contained in this report should neither be interpreted as conclusions, nor final decisions. The process of developing the CETT is dynamic; it evolves and changes as new information and inputs that become available are considered. Ongoing research and activities continue to inform the appropriate developmental focus and structure for each sub-regional Center of Excellence.

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iv

GLOSSARY

International Terms

AV	Audiovisual
BEPS	Basic Education Policy Support
CAII	Creative Associates International, Inc.
CAPS	Central American Peace Scholarship
CASS	Cooperative Association of States for Scholarship
CETT	Centers of Excellence for Teacher Training
CI	CETT Coordinating Institution
CLASP	Central and Latin American Scholarship Program
EU	European Union
GODR	Government of the Dominican Republic
GOES	Government of El Salvador
GOG	Government of Guatemala
GOH	Government of Honduras
GOM	Government of Mexico
GON	Government of Nicaragua
GOP	Government of Panama
GTZ	Agencia de Cooperación Alemana (German Development Agency)
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IDB	Inter-American Development Bank
IT	Information Technology
JICA	Japanese International Cooperation Agency
MINED	Ministry of Education
NCR	National Council of Reading
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
OAS	Organization of American States
PAHO	Pan-American Health Organization
SOW	Statement of Work
TOT	Training of Trainers
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

Costa Rica

CEINAL	Center for Statistics and Information
CIDE	Center for Educational Research
CLADS	National Council for Competition and Development
CONEP	National Council of Superior Education
CRUSA	Costa Rica-USA Cooperative Foundation
EBAIS	Team for Integral Health
EDUNET	Ministry of Education's school connectivity program

FOD	Omar Dengo Foundation
IAFA	Institute for Alcoholism and Drug Dependency
ICT	Educational Network in Costa Rica
INCAE	Instituto Centroamericano de Administración de Empresas (Central American Institute for Business Administration)
MSP	Ministry of Public Health
PANI	Patronato Nacional de Infancia (National Fund for Childhood)
PIE	Programa de Informática Educativa (Educational Computing Program)
UCR	University of Costa Rica
UNA	Universidad Nacional Autónoma (National University)
UNED	Universidad Estatal de Educación a Distancia (Nacional Distance Education University)

Dominican Republic

ADP	Dominican Association of Teachers
AVES	Virtual Classrooms
CAMPE	Center for Small and Micro-Business Development
EDUSOFT	educational software developed at PUCMM
FLACSO	Latin American Social Sciences Faculty
GODR	Government of the Dominican Republic
INAFOCAM	National Teacher Training Institute
INTEC	Instituto Tecnológico de Santo Domingo (Technological Institute of Santo Domingo)
ITLA	Instituto Tecnológico de Las Américas (Technological Institute of the Americas)
PCV	Peace Corps Volunteer
PNUD	United Nationals Development Program
PPMB	Professionalization of In-Service High-School Teachers (donor-funded project)
PRODEP	Proyecto de Desarrollo de la Educación Primaria (Primary Education Development Project)
PUCMM	Pontificia Universidad Católica Madre y Maestra
RED ATEI	Network of Ibero-American Educational Television
SEE	Secretaría de Estado de Educación (Dominican Ministry of Education)
UASD	Universidad Autónoma de Santo Domingo (Autonomous University of Santo Domingo)
UCE	Universidad Central del Este (Central University of the East)

El Salvador

CRA	Centro de Recursos para el Aprendizaje (Learning Resource Center)
EDUCO	Community-Based Education Program of World Bank

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Creative Associates International, Inc.

vi

FEPADE	Fundación Empresarial para el Desarrollo Educativo (Business Foundation for Education Development)
FUNPRES	Foundation for Special Education
ITCA	Instituto Tecnológico de Centroamérica (Technological Institute of Central America)
OEI	Organization of Ibero-American States
REDUC	Education Resources Program
UCA	Universidad Centroamericana-José Simeón Caña (Central American University
UMA	Universidad Modula Abierta (Open University)

Guatemala

AI	Active Involvement (teaching methodology)
CATEN	Commission to Transform Normal Schools
EDUMAYA	Mayan Education Project
FUNDAZUCAR	National Sugar Producers Foundation
FUNRURAL	Rural Development Foundation
MAYACAM	Mayan Learning Center
PROMEM	Project to Mobilize Mayan Education
PRONADE	World Bank self-governing school program
PRONERE	National School Evaluation Program
ULEM	Local Units for Mayan Education
URL	Rafael Landivar University
USAC	San Carlos University
UVG	Universidad del Valle de Guatemala

Honduras

COLPROSUMAH	Labor Union Organization of Teachers
CUED	University Center for Distance Education
EDUCATODOS	Educación para todos (Education for all)- a USAID education program
FEREMA	Fundación Educativa Ricardo Maduro (Educational Foundation)
FUNDAUPN	Fundación Universidad Pedagógica Nacional (National Pedagogical University Foundation)
FTP	File Transfer Protocol
MERECE	Coalition of Donor Agencies
PFC	Continuing Education Program
PREAL	Programa de Reforma Educativa en América Latina (Partnership for Educational Revitalization in the Americas)
PREUFOD	Special University Program for Training Teachers
UNITEC	Universidad Tecnológica Centroamericano
UPN	Universidad Pedagógica Nacional (National Pedagogical University)

Basic Education and Policy Support (BEPS) Activity
Creative Associates International, Inc.

vii

Mexico

BENM	Benemerita National Teachers' School
CECTE	document center at ILCE
CREFAL	Centro de Cooperación Regional para la Educación de Adultos (Center for Regional Cooperation for Adult Education)
DGTVE	Dirección General de Televisión Educativa (National Office of Educational Television)
EDUSAT	Satellite Television
ILCE	Instituto Latinoamericano de la Comunicación Educativa (Latin American Institute of Educational Communication)
PRONAP	Programa Nacional de Actualización Permanente para Maestros (National Permanent Teacher Training Program)
SEP	Secretaría de Educación Pública (Public Education Secretariat/ Ministry of Education in Mexico)

Nicaragua

AMCHAM	American Chamber of Commerce
BASE	USAID basic education project
CLACDS	Centro Latinoamericano para la Competitividad y el Desarrollo Sostenible
COSEP	Council of Private Businesses
FyA	Fe y Alegría Schools
IBE	Intercultural Bilingual Education
INCAE	Instituto Centroamericano de Administración de Empresas (Central American Institute for Business Administration)
MECD	Ministry of Education, Culture, and Sports
UNAN	Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Nicaragua
URACCAN	Universidad de las Regiones Autónomas de la Costa Caribe Nicaragüense (University of the Autonomous Regions of the Caribbean Coast of Nicaragua)

Panama

AMIA	Association of Independent Teachers
APEDE	Business Association for Educational Development
CADE	Commission of Executives
CEFACEI	Family/Community Centers for Basic Education
CERLAC	Regional Center to Promote Reading in LAC
FIS	Fondo de Inversión Social (Development Fund)
IEU	Indigenous Education Unit
PRODE	IDB Educational Development Project
SENACYT	National Secretariat of Science and Technology
UNP	Universidad Nacional de Panamá
UTEP	Universidad Tecnológico de Panamá

Basic Education and Policy Support (BEPS) Activity
Creative Associates International, Inc.

viii

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is the result of a recent assessment of educational needs that took place in Central America, Mexico, and the Dominican Republic during the month of October, 2001[1]. The principal purpose of the assessment was to determine teacher training needs and the special role that a proposed Center of Excellence might play in meeting such needs and mitigating the region's educational problems. In addition, information was requested about the capacity of local institutions to support a Center and to help assure its protracted sustainability. Finally, universities and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) were profiled and recommendations were made regarding potential host institutions for the Center.

Training and Related Educational Needs

The countries of Central America are especially sensitive to the importance of quality education programs that equip people with the skills required to succeed in increasingly competitive markets. Leaders of both the education and business communities in these countries are rightfully concerned about the weaknesses that often characterize virtually all their public education programs. They recognize that compelling reforms are needed to help ensure that future generations will be prepared for the rapidly shifting requirements spawned by modernity and for the attendant changes in the workplace and the community.

Numerous education reform programs, costing millions of dollars, have been implemented in recent years to enhance the quality of education from Mexico to Panama. Nonetheless, too many of the enduring problems of the past continue to persist in the present. Classrooms remain overcrowded. Materials, especially books, are scarce or non-existent. Schools are poorly lit and ventilated. Testing programs are insufficient to accurately measure student achievement. Teachers are inadequately prepared and underpaid. Teacher absenteeism is also very high. School days are too short, and dropout rates are too high.

While the list of reasons that contribute to deficiencies in education programs is both varied and complex, perhaps none is as compelling as inadequacies in teacher quality. As this report indicates, both pre-service and in-service teachers and school administrators could benefit from additional training to strengthen classroom management skills and methodologies.

Training is generally felt to be needed more at the in-service level and primarily in pedagogical methods, rather than content. Whereas teachers, for example, know how to read and write, they frequently have difficulties teaching others those literacy skills. In addition, follow-up was cited as perhaps the single most important requirement to help assure the long-term success of short-term training activities.

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[1] Countries visited in Central America were: Panamá, Guatemala, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Honduras and Nicaragua.

Basic Education and Policy Support (BEPS) Activity
Creative Associates International, Inc.

ix

Because many countries in Central America require teachers to have university degrees, educators are now more knowledgeable about subject matter. The more traditional "normal school" programs to train future teachers, which are the equivalent of specialized high-school programs, are being replaced rapidly by university teacher preparation programs. In general, this paradigm shift is seen as a positive move to produce more qualified teachers in the future. At the same time, indicators reveal a continuing disconnect between the rhetoric of university settings and the reality of classrooms. This is seen as especially true in multi-grade schools in the more impoverished, rural areas of Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua.

Notably the report also reflects high levels of interest by in-service teachers in receiving additional training to enhance their pedagogical techniques. Not surprisingly, teachers themselves are frequently the first to recognize their weaknesses. They, too, want to see children excel in their classrooms. As can be expected, however, incentives related to status and income are also important to help motivate teachers to participate in after-school or weekend training exercises.

Country Capacities

Although persistent problems in teacher training and other areas present seemingly insurmountable challenges, the assessment also revealed an array of NGOs that are paving the way for sustainable change in their countries. Given education's direct and immediate impact on both consumers and employees, people who own and operate both large and small businesses are among the first to recognize its importance. Consequently, this group has a very realistic and economic interest in strengthening the quality of education. Working primarily through NGOs and faith-based groups, private citizens are increasingly assuming public responsibilities as they seek creative solutions to the enduring problems that confront public schools.

Organizations such as coffee producers in Guatemala, manufacturers in El Salvador and sugar producers in Panama are now directly involved in programs to strengthen education. These programs can run the gamut from scholarships to materials purchases to the funding of in-service training programs and the building of additional classrooms. For these NGOs, the support of education is considered less of an expense and more of an investment in the future.

Complementing the work of NGOs in the region is the emergence in the past decade of numerous institutions that are moving quickly and creatively into education technology programs. Both universities and NGOs now provide hardware and software that open up the World Wide Web and its many resources to schools and teachers with telephone line access.

Innovative and interactive distance-education programs from high-tech universities and foundations in virtually all countries visited are now connected directly to either the classroom or the living room where televisions and telephone access are available. The

programs are opening new electronic avenues that can not only enhance teacher-training programs, but also ignite learning among formerly disinterested students.

Expanding levels of private-sector participation and rapidly growing information and communication technology (ICT) centers throughout the region should be considered as resources to support efforts such as the Center of Excellence to strengthen the quality of education. The numbers and types of creative institutions are so impressive that the report recommends that the Center serve primarily as an entity to coordinate an informal network of resources that may or may not have an official relationship with the Center.

As reflected in the report, there is considerable capacity in many countries of the region to support the work of a Center of Excellence.

Institutional Profiles and Recommendations for Follow-Up Assessment

Institutions that could possibly host the Center of Excellence were identified. Nearly 40 such institutions, primarily universities and NGOs, were visited and profiled as part of the assessment (see section IV). Results were recorded utilizing a range of evaluation criteria related to serving as a resource and/or a source. Institutions were reviewed and scored (see Table 6). Of those entities, six institutions were recommended for additional study during a follow-up assessment. An explanation of the methodology used to select these entities, and summary profiles of each of the six candidates, are included in the report. From the list of organizations profiled, graded, and scrutinized, it is the opinion of the team that although many of the institutions have some of the needed specialization, no one institution has the capability to serve alone as a regional Center of Excellence. Nevertheless, because of the combined expertise that exists in the region, this much seems certain: finding a host and a home for the Center should not be a problem in this region.

The report concludes with a summary and analysis of the more salient lessons learned during the assessment and recommendations offered by the research team regarding ways in which the Center might function. The complete country assessment reports, research instruments, and list of contacts are included in the annexes.

Basic Education and Policy Support (BEPS) Activity
Creative Associates International, Inc.

xi

I.   INTRODUCTION

"We are committed to making education a centerpiece of our economic agenda—because learning and literacy are the foundations for development and democracy."

President George W. Bush
April 21, 2001

A.   Centers of Excellence for Teacher Training

Countries around the globe are making concerted efforts to improve educational outcomes. Changes and reforms seemed necessary after several studies established the correlation between educational attainment and economic and social progress. At the Summit of the Americas in Quebec City in April 2001, President George W. Bush drew attention to the fact that key educational indicators for Latin America and the Caribbean compare poorly with the rest of the world, with the lower socioeconomic groups being hardest hit by deficiencies in the education systems. While acknowledging the complexities involved in determining the reasons for underachievement, President Bush highlighted inadequacies in teacher quality as a major contributing factor. President Bush further noted that most teachers and school administrators in the hemisphere have limited resources and that their training is inadequate in preparing them to deal with the special needs of disadvantaged students.

In response to this need to improve teacher quality, President Bush announced that his administration would support the creation of three Centers of Excellence for Teacher Training (CETT), to be housed in existing institutions in the Caribbean, the Andean region of South America, and Central America. These regional teacher training and resource centers would provide training to improve teacher and school administrator quality and the quality of early instruction in classrooms, with special emphasis on poorer countries and teachers in disadvantaged communities. Specifically, the major focus of the training programs would be on improving reading instruction and upgrading the knowledge and pedagogical skills of poorly qualified teachers. It is expected that about 15,000 teachers will benefit from this training over four years.

USAID will administer the resources and coordinate the program for these hemispheric Centers of Excellence, with the guidance of an advisory panel of U.S. and Latin American experts. The Department of Education, the Department of State, the Organization of American States (OAS), Ministries of Education, business and citizen groups, faith-based organizations, international donors, and other hemispheric governments will be enlisted to form a partnership with USAID for program implementation.

The rationale and programs envisioned for the Centers of Excellence for Teacher Training are based on the following assumptions:

- Weak reading skills contribute significantly to scholastic underachievement.
- Teachers have limited skills to teach reading adequately, particularly to disadvantaged groups.
- Through improvements in decoding and reading comprehension skills, appropriate teacher training will help to create a more literate society, which, in turn, will fuel improved local economic development.
- A regional approach, centered on the training-of-trainers (TOT) approach and appropriate support, will be the most efficient and effective strategy to address the poor teacher quality and inequities in education.

Based on these assumptions, the Centers of Excellence for Teacher Training are expected to provide:

- A training-of-trainers program to improve teachers' and school administrators' skills, especially in reading instruction;
- A clearinghouse of teacher training materials; and
- An Internet portal linking teacher training institutions, think tanks, schools, teachers, and universities so that they can share materials, "best practices," and "lessons learned" as well as provide virtual training.

B.   Purpose of the Activity

In June 2001, USAID contracted with Creative Associates International, Inc. through the Basic Education and Policy Support (BEPS) Activity (Contract HNE-I-00-00-00038-00, LAC/SD-EHR Task Order No. 04) to assist in laying the groundwork for the Centers of Excellence in Teacher Training. As specified in the statement of work (SOW) and the work plan (included in Annexes 1 and 2), BEPS was given responsibility for two major activities: assessing regional teacher training needs and the potential capacity of institutions to serve as regional Centers; and establishing and supporting a Consultative Committee for the Centers. Key to this assignment is the implementation of three regional needs and capacity assessments—one each for the Caribbean, Central America, and the Andean region of South America.

Each assessment will:

- Identify major teacher training needs that the Centers of Excellence could address;
- Identify institutions that could serve as partners to the Center of Excellence;
- Determine institutional needs to create a Center of Excellence; and
- Recommend alternative choices for a Center of Excellence based on assessment findings.

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2

The assessment has been conceived in two phases, with the first to be completed in the fall of 2001.   A follow-up assessment is scheduled to begin in November 2001. This document reports the findings of an initial assessment in Central America.

## C.	Research Methodology

The needs assessment for the Central American region involved eight countries: Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, and Panama. All except two of these countries—the Dominican Republic and Mexico—were selected because they are traditionally considered a part of Central America. Although generally considered a Caribbean country, the Spanish-speaking Dominican Republic was included in the Central America grouping, rather than the English-speaking Caribbean. Similarly, English-speaking Belize, although a part of Central America, was included in the Caribbean study. The Dominican Republic is a natural beneficiary of the Spanish-language services and materials of the Center of Excellence in Central America, and is also currently strengthening its ties and trade linkages with Central America.

The country assessment in Mexico was distinct from the others. Because of Mexico's location in the region and the distance from the other Central American countries, research in that country did not include the search for an institution that could potentially host the Center of Excellence. Rather, the focus was exclusively to identify the capacities of institutions to provide educational technology support to the institution that is selected to serve as the center. Two institutions, the Dirección General de Televisión Educativa (DGTVE) and the Instituto Latinoamericano de la Comunicación Educativa (ILCE), were visited in Mexico City. The Technological Institute of Monterrey located in the northern city of Monterrey was also visited.

Two teams of two persons each were assigned to visit the eight countries. Each team was comprised of an Education Generalist and a Teacher Training Specialist. One team was assigned to visit Panama, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic and Mexico. The other team visited Nicaragua, Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador. Visits were limited to approximately five days in each country, with time allotted for preparing back-to-office country reports within two to three days of completing the country visit.

Prior to visiting the countries, the team met with CAII and USAID personnel in Washington to develop specific research instruments and attendant questions (see Annex 3). Throughout the week-long meeting, the team endeavored to establish uniformity in terms of research, goals, strategies, methods and protocols. With four researchers, eight countries, and four weeks of visits, it was important to reach a consensus on the type of questions posed and the order of reporting.

Once in country, researchers conducted team interviews on certain occasions and one-on-one interviews on others. High-level meetings such as those with Ministry personnel or USAID functionaries were generally attended by both research team members.

Initial meetings in each country were held with officials from the Ministry of Education (MINED) and USAID. Team members also met with representatives of existing universities and institutions specializing in teacher training as well as with representatives of key stakeholders, including NGOs, teachers' unions, and the private sector. Universities and teacher training institutions that were visited were recommended by USAID/Washington, the Centers of Excellence Advisory Committee, and Ministry of Education and USAID mission staff in each country. A total of 36 universities and teacher training institutions were visited. Annex 4 includes a list of people contacted. A comprehensive list of universities and institutions is provided in Chapter IV, Institutional Profiles.

As per the terms and conditions of the Scope of Work, the teams held interviews with individuals and informal meetings with focus groups. The purposes of the visits were:

- To determine the training needs that teachers have at both the pre-service (university) and in-service levels;
- To gauge the capacity of countries to support the work of a Center of Excellence; and
- To recommend institutions to be scrutinized more closely in a follow-up assessment.

In addition to interviews and focus groups, schools were visited. Special efforts were made to visit schools in rural areas and to observe teachers involved in teaching reading to primary-school children. Interviews with teachers, parents, school principals and supervisors, and members of the teachers' unions were held to help elicit specific teacher training needs, especially as related to reading instruction.

While in the field, the team leader and CAII headquarters staff remained in daily contact with team members via email.

The team also conducted desktop research to contextualize research findings in such areas as primary education, educational reform studies, literacy levels, percentage of federal funds spent on education in each country, evaluations of teacher training seminars, etc. Researchers also were asked to retrieve and send back available literature in the countries they visited. As a result, a library of CD-ROMs, textbooks, university syllabi, brochures about universities and NGOs, and curriculum reports has been compiled.

Team members were requested to complete draft reports immediately after each country visit. Consequently, when teams returned to Washington, most country assessments were already completed in draft form. Following the country visits, team members returned to Washington to report findings, reconcile information, and reach consensus about priority teacher training needs, country capacities, and the institutions that should be recommended for the follow-up assessment.

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4

From the 36 institutions profiled as potential hosts of the Center, 26 were initially eliminated based on such core criteria as interest in hosting the Center, experience in teaching teachers, accessibility, financial stability, and management capabilities. Although institutions may not have qualified to host the Center on the basis of selected evaluation criteria, it is important to note that many of the universities and NGOs throughout the region have personnel and programs that could and should be tapped to provide technical assistance to the Center at some future time. In this regard, the concept of a "network" emerged, with the Center of Excellence serving primarily as a coordinator of resources, supplied by an informal network of qualified institutions in Central America.

With 26 of the 36 institutions eliminated, ten remained for further consideration. The final selection process involved identifying additional criteria, giving weight to these criteria, and finally grading the institution. Based on this system, six institutions were recommended to be candidates for the follow-up assessment.

Team members subsequently participated in a daylong presentation to USAID personnel to present research findings and to make recommendations regarding structural-functional aspects of the design of the Center of Excellence for the Central American Region.

D. Organization of Report

The report is organized to introduce the reader to Central America, and to provide the information requested in the Scope of Work. This includes primarily: teacher training needs, the capacity of each Central American country for the CETT, and profiles of the institutions recommended for the follow-up assessment.

Specifically, Chapter II provides an overview of the Central American region to help contextualize the educational problems faced by parents, teachers, politicians, and the public and private sectors in this part of the world. Also included are: an overview of educational needs and programs, and an analysis and summary of local resources available throughout this region that could provide a network of support for a Center of Excellence, thereby helping to assure long-term sustainability.

Chapter III details specific training needs identified in many of the countries visited. Chapter IV provides information about institutions profiled, criteria chosen, and the methodology utilized to select candidates for the follow-up assessment.

Chapter V includes the research team's six recommended institutions to be researched further during the follow-up assessment. In Chapter VI, recommendations are made regarding the design of the Center of Excellence. Included here is information about the form and function of a "resource network" that can help the Center by providing both technical and financial support. Chapter VII offers a summary and analysis of the more salient lessons learned as a result of this research.

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5

Finally, there are five annexes:

1. Scope of Work
2. Work Plan
3. Research Instruments Used During Country Visits
4. List of Contacts
5. Country Profiles (with descriptions of institutions)

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6

II.   OVERVIEW OF CENTRAL AMERICA AND THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

A.   General Context

There are nearly 35 million people in all Central American countries combined. Stretching 1,200 miles from north to south, the region comprises the countries of Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica and Panama. Including the island nation of the Dominican Republic with its 8 million people, the total population of the region reaches 43 million. While *mestizos* of mixed white and Indian heritage make up nearly half the general population of the region, Indians account for one in five inhabitants and are located predominantly in Guatemala. While the Dominican Republic does not share an indigenous presence with the remainder of the region, the country has become increasingly heterogeneous with an influx of Kreyol-speaking Haitians (estimated at approximately one million by the Dominican Ministry of Foreign Relations in 2001). Economically, socially, politically and culturally, there are both differences and similarities among these peoples. The differences seem to outweigh common traits, so that generalizing about Central America can be both a delicate and difficult task. However, Spanish is the common official language in each country of the region (excluding Belize). As shown in the table below, 22 percent of the 43 million people are within basic school age. The highest adult literacy rate can be found in Costa Rica (95.3 percent) and the lowest in Guatemala (67.3 percent).

Table 1. Basic Social and Economic Indicators

	Population (millions) 1998	Average Annual Rate of Population Growth (%) 1990-1997	Population Ages 6-14 (thousands) 1997	GDP per capita (PPP) 1998	Adult Literacy (% ages 15+) 1998
Costa Rica	4	3.0	751	5,987	95.3
Dom. Rep.	8	1.9	1,636	4,598	82.8
El Salvador	6	2.1	1,233	4,036	77.8
Guatemala	11	2.7	2,601	3,505	67.3
Honduras	6	3.0	1,443	2,433	73.4
Nicaragua	5	2.9	1,139	2,142	67.9
Panama	3	1.8	522	5,249	91.4

Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators, 2000; UNESCO, World Education Report, 2000; UNDP, Human Development Report, 2000; PREAL, Lagging Behind, 2001.

Central America is linked geologically via a lengthy, volatile chain of volcanoes that stretches along the Pacific Coast, providing higher elevations, cooler climates and fertile land for coffee production. All Central American countries have coastal land, with very humid tropical climates to the northeast suitable for the production of such tropical foods as bananas and sugar cane. Drier, hot, coastal lands on the Pacific side of the isthmus lend themselves primarily to cotton, sugar cane and rice production.

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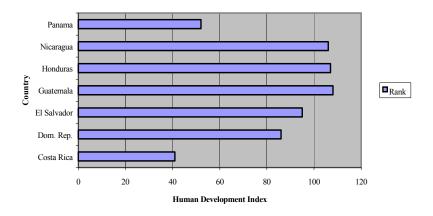Creative Associates International, Inc.

7

In terms of geography, the instability of the Pacific Rim has impacted Central America frequently and severely. Earthquakes and volcanic eruptions have wiped out entire villages, some within the past five years. Similarly this area lies in the path of tropical storms, depressions and hurricanes that wreak destruction several times a year. The combination of wind and rain provides a one-two punch that requires major rebuilding efforts and massive expenditures of scarce public funds. Recurring drought cycles, as in the Dominican Republic, are a persistent natural hazard also.

Economically, poor farmers make up nearly 75 percent of all rural inhabitants. Industrialization has progressed considerably in the past several decades as modern modes of transportation and communication have developed. Regardless, the economics of the region remain mired in vast discrepancies between rich and poor. The markedly poor distribution of wealth, especially between urban and rural populations, continues to remain a major challenge both to national and international development entities.

Politics, geography and climate have presented ongoing threats to the well being of the people of Central America and the Dominican Republic. Politically, the move to more democratic, open and participatory societies has instigated major upheavals in recent years.

Most countries in Central America are considered Medium as per the UNDP Human Development Index. The Index ranks High (1-48), Medium (49-126) and Low (127-162) human development. All Central American countries and the Dominican Republic are in the mid-level, except Costa Rica, which is considered among the High human development countries. Nicaragua, Honduras and Guatemala rank very closely at the lowest levels of the medium band, and Panama lies between them and Costa Rica.

Graph 1. Human Development Index Rank

Source: UNDP, Human Development Report, 2001.

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8

B.   Education Overview

Social development related to housing, health and education has been negatively affected by political and economic occurrences in the region during recent years. Generally, where economies have been strong and political processes orderly, the fabric of society has been strengthened (i.e., stable housing, improved access to health care, participation in education) and some progress has been made in enhancing the quality of life.

In terms of years of education and access, there is still a gap between the rural and the urban areas in all countries except Costa Rica (see table below). In Guatemala and El Salvador the gap between the two areas is the most noticeable. The reform efforts on gender access to education have been successful in most countries, with women equaling or surpassing enrollment levels in all countries but Guatemala.

Table 2. Average Years of Education, Ages 15-24*

	Urban Area			Rural Area		
	Both Sexes	Men	Women	Both Sexes	Men	Women
Costa Rica	8.8	8.6	9.0	7.0	6.8	7.1
Dom. Rep.	8.4	8.0	8.8	6.3	6.0	6.7
El Salvador	9.0	8.9	9.0	5.5	5.5	5.5
Guatemala	7.5	7.6	7.5	3.6	4.1	3.1
Honduras	7.6	7.3	7.8	4.9	4.7	5.1
Nicaragua	7.5	7.2	7.8	4.2	3.8	4.6
Panamá	10.0	9.8	10.3	8.0	7.6	8.4

Source: CEPAL, Panorama Social de America Latina, 2000-2001.
* Data for Nicaragua, Guatemala and Mexico from 1998; Dominican Republic from 1997; all others from 1999.

All countries suffer from high levels of repetition, late enrollment, prolonged absenteeism and school dropouts in primary education. In Nicaragua, 25 percent of students enrolled in primary school are older than the official age group for that grade, while in Honduras and Panama 12 percent of the students are overage. There is no data available for El Salvador. In terms of secondary enrollment, the rates drop dramatically in all countries. An illustration of the dimension of the problem is the fact that Panama is the least affected country, with a decrease in enrollment of 50 percent between primary and secondary school.

Table 3. School Enrollment in Primary Education, 1997

	Enrollment in primary school	Number of pupils enrolled in primary school of official primary school age	Children reaching grade 5 (%) 1995-1997
Costa Rica	525,273	452,837	90
Dom. Rep.	1,492,596	1,235,721	-
El Salvador	1,191,052	-	77
Guatemala	1,544,709	1,271,599	50
Honduras	1,054,964	932,343	-
Nicaragua	777,917	585,426	51
Panama*	377,994	332,873	-

Source: UNDP, Human Development Report, 2001; UNESCO, Education for All Year 2000 Assessment, 2000. Data from 1998.

Graph 2. Primary and Secondary Net Enrollment (1995)
Source: PREAL, Lagging Behind, 2001.

Although advances have been made in health delivery systems and education reform efforts, much remains to be done as the new century unfolds. Education requires special attention because it is an all-encompassing activity that transcends all other areas of life. Education impacts economics, and economics in turn impact health. Poorly trained people cannot qualify for the jobs required in the increasingly complex world of modern technology. Without qualified personnel, businesses will take their investment capital elsewhere. Both public- and private-sector institutions are fully aware of the importance of a well-educated society, but frequently they are not willing to approve appropriate levels of funding to ensure that educational goals are fulfilled.

The level of commitment to funding is reflected in classroom learning. In Costa Rica and Panama, where budgets for education rank among the top 50 countries in the world, education indicators are generally favorable whereas in Nicaragua, Honduras and Guatemala, where much less of the GNP is allotted to education, indicators are unsatisfactory. The gap between expenditures in pre-primary and primary in comparison with secondary education remains high in all countries.

Table 4: GNP Expenditure in Education

Country	Rank	Public Education Expenditure	Public Education Expenditure by Level

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10

		% of GNP	% of Government Expenditure	Pre-primary & Primary	Secondary	Tertiary
Costa Rica	41	5.4	22.8	40.2	24.3	28.3
Mexico	51	4.9	23	50.3	32.5	17.2
Panama	52	5.1	16.3	31.1	19.8	26.1
D R	86	2.3	13.8	49.5	12.5	13
El Salvador	95	2.5	16	63.5	6.5	7.2
Nicaragua	106	3.9	8.8	68.6	13.9	-
Honduras	107	3.6	16.5	52.5	21.5	16.6
Guatemala	108	1.7	15.8	63	12.1	15.2

Source: UNDP Report 2001, data from 1995-97.

The level of national budgets is just one factor that needs to be taken into account when discussing education issues in this region. Political strife, for example, has played a crucial role in interrupting normal school days in such countries as Nicaragua, El Salvador and Guatemala. Major political upheaval, coupled with civil and military conflict in large areas of these countries, have wreaked havoc with school calendars and decimated, in some cases, the regular school year. In addition, natural disasters, particularly hurricanes and earthquakes, have destroyed roads, bridges and school buildings in large areas of Honduras, Dominican Republic, El Salvador and Nicaragua, thus limiting children's access to education.

In this context, education issues are defined by four key problems:[2]

- Education is managed by centralized, bureaucratic and frequently politicized government institutions that absorb significant resources and often slow down much-needed innovation and reform;

- Investment in education is inadequate and unequal. While this is due in part to widespread poverty, it also reflects a lack of serious national commitment to making education a high priority and to making it more accessible to the poor. The result is inefficient management and low coverage for indigenous populations and the rural poor;

- The teaching profession has deteriorated in part because of wage schedules that fail to take performance into account; and

- Education standards have not been put into place and assessment systems have not been consolidated, thus limiting efforts to assess quality, performance and the actual impact of policies.

Against these budgetary, political and geographic problems, it is encouraging to see numerous individuals and institutions working to enhance the quality of education in their countries. Education reforms have been implemented in nearly all of the region's

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[2] Task Force on Education Reform in Central America: Tomorrow is Too Late, PREAL, 2001.

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11

countries, due in large part to grants and loans from institutions such as USAID, the Inter-American Development Bank, the World Bank, the European Economic Community, the Japanese Development Agency and the United Nations.

Some of these reforms are beginning to yield positive results. Efforts at decentralization have been encouraging in several countries, including admirable progress in this area in Nicaragua. Reading scores have improved in several countries, albeit not at the levels hoped for. Training programs for new teachers have been expanded and strengthened. Such training is now often conducted in four-year university programs rather than in high school programs. All governments have embarked on education reforms (see table below), often with the support of the private sector, civil society leaders and the donor community.

Table 5. Education Reforms in Central America

	Institutional Reorganization & Decentralization of Management	Strengthening School Autonomy (curricular, pedagogical, financial)	Improvements in Quality and Equity: Focused Programs to Provide Materials, Equipment, Better Infrastructure	Curricular Reform	Exten-sion of the School Day	Professional-ization of Teaching and Teacher Training	Increase in Education Investment (Base Year 1996)
Costa Rica	X		X	X		X	
Dom. Rep.			X				
El Salvador			X	X		X	X
Guat.	X	X					
Nic.	X			X			X
Panama		X				X	

Source: " Lagging Behind", PREAL, 2001.
No data available for Honduras

However, a follow-up meeting to the Summit of the Americas was held among Ministers of Education of the Americas in September 2001 in which Central American Ministers of Education presented the following main points of action to be taken in Central America:

- Improve information systems and identification of programs and projects;
- Increase investment in education;
- Maximize the investment;
- Integrate the different policies affecting the social sectors;
- Encourage social participation;
- Adopt negotiated educational policies;
- Coordinate actions at different educational levels and programs; and

- Coordinate the different curricular components.[3]

The Central American Ministries of Education committed to:

- Strengthen equity and quality of education;
- Improve school management, decentralization, social participation and teacher training;
- Reinforce youth programs, secondary education and certification of vocational training;
- Reinforce higher education, science, technology and unified certification system;
- Promote new technologies for education.

It is encouraging that the Central American Ministers of Education recognized that teacher training is an important strategy for improving the quality of education in the region. Hopefully, this recognition will be translated into a positive reception and broad support for the Centers of Excellence for Teacher Training initiative.

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[3] *Central America's Achievements and Challenges*, II Ministers of Education of the Americas Meeting, Summit of the Americas. Punta del Este, Uruguay, September, 2001.

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13

III.   TEACHER TRAINING NEEDS

A.   Introduction

To determine the teacher training role of the Center of Excellence, specific needs of both pre-service and in-service teachers were identified in all countries visited. There is a general recognition among the region's actors—from the ministries to the private sector to international donors—of the need for better teacher training.

A general description of the regional characteristics of pre-service and in-service training will be presented, followed by the specific teacher training needs found during the field visits to the countries.

1. Pre-Service Training

Teachers working in schools in Central America and the Dominican Republic could possess four types of professional background. These categories are related to the kind of institution they have (or have not) attended for pre-service training. Teachers' background and training determine their level of exposure to teaching methodologies, practical supervised experience and pedagogical issues before entering the classroom. Some teachers have no formal pre-service training; others have a degree from either an *escuela normal* (normal school) or a university (either *profesorado* or *licenciatura).* Thus, teachers fall into one of the following categories of training:

- *No pre-service training: Maestros empiricos* are teachers who have completed secondary education, or perhaps only primary education, and have received no formal teacher training. Untrained teachers are most often found in isolated, rural schools that are difficult to staff.

- *Normal School degree:* Many teachers have attended normal schools, which are secondary-level institutions where students receive a high school diploma and a professional teaching certification simultaneously.

- *Profesorado* (associate's degree)*:* At universities, aspiring teachers can earn an associate's degree in preschool-, primary- or secondary-level teaching. Programs last two years and usually have a practical component so that students obtain some classroom experience.

- *Licenciatura* (bachelor's degree)*:* Universities also offer a four-year course of study to receive a *licenciatura,* which is considered equivalent to a bachelor's degree. Universities generally provide less practical teaching experience, but a deeper study of pedagogical theories.

Throughout the region, education reform programs are generally regarded as having brought about substantive changes in the quality of both pre-service and in-service teacher training programs during recent years. The shift in pre-service teacher training programs from teacher training high schools or "normal schools" to universities stands out as one of the most important and ubiquitous reforms aimed at enhancing teacher quality. With the exception of Guatemala, Nicaragua and Honduras (although the GOH is moving toward requiring university training), which continue to rely entirely on normal schools to fulfill pre-service training needs, the change to universities has become more the norm in the region than the exception.

Table 6: Years of Study Required to Become a Primary School Teacher

	Secondary Level		Tertiary Level			
	Normal School		*Profesorado* or University			
	1	2	1	2	3	4
Costa Rica			▓	▓	▓	▓
Dominican Republic*			▓	▓	▓	▓
El Salvador*			▓	▓	▓	
Guatemala	▓	▓				
Honduras	▓	▓				
Nicaragua	▓	▓	▓			
Panama		▓	▓	▓	▓	

Source: "Who is preparing our children for the century of knowledge?", World Bank, 2001.
* Note: Many teachers in the Dominican Republic still complete only two years of university-level training while El Salvador has increased requirements in this area up to five years.

Although there remain visible disconnects between the rhetoric of the university setting and the reality of the public-school classrooms, the shift to higher-level educational institutions for future teachers is generally acknowledged to have enhanced the quality of instruction at both the primary and secondary school levels.

Nonetheless, university programs are frequently considered to be more adept at strengthening teachers' knowledge of content matter than at preparing them in classroom management skills and innovative methodologies. In this regard, universities are occasionally faulted for remaining detached from the realities of the classroom, especially those that typify isolated and impoverished areas of the country (i.e., multi-grade, multi-age classrooms).

Even though pre-service programs may be improving at some level, there are underlying problems that create an obstacle to reforms and progress. These are the often-ignored problems related to the candidates entering the field of teaching. In her study, "The Preparation of Teachers in Latin America", Eleonora Villegas-Reimers identifies four common characteristics that define the majority of students:

- *Teaching candidates often have poor academic preparation before entering the pre-service institution.* Students have been educated by poorly trained teachers, which creates a cycle of low quality education. Also, there is a self-selection of poorly

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15

trained students entering the teaching profession. Teaching has low prestige, status and pay, and lower-functioning students often enter the profession as they have few other career options.

- *Reasons for selecting teaching are usually not related to an interest in the profession.* Teacher preparation is usually shorter and less expensive than other careers. The programs are not very difficult and the certificate almost always guarantees a job upon graduation. All these factors make the profession attractive to low-performing students.

- *Teaching candidate profiles often do not meet the requirements to be a teacher.* Students might not have the knowledge, skills and attitudes to become a good teacher; however, due to the shortage of teachers, institutions are not selective in admission to their teacher training programs.

- *Drop in the number of candidates applying to training institutions.* In many countries, increasing requirements for entering teachers have brought about a decrease in teaching candidates. The profession does not offer enough incentives for students to spend four or more years to get a teaching degree.

2. In-Service Training

Whether in universities, distance education settings or more traditional training venues, ministry officials are now more sensitive to the importance of attracting primarily in-service teachers to attend courses that impart new methods and content. As a result, in-service teachers may now benefit from training options made available via communication innovations, particularly the Internet. Quality television programs such as those produced by DGTVE and ILCE now span the region and are available in creative distance education programs carried by television or on the Web.

In spite of these advances, in-service teacher training continues to challenge the region's countries because many past teacher training problems continue to persist in the present, among them: the large number of teachers in need of training, the cost associated with traditional training methodologies, and the need for defining more effective methodologies and systems.

At a very basic level, the way of imparting in-service training seminars is under question and review. For many years the notion that large-scale programs can operate through "cascades" prevailed. Under this system, a small group of teachers received training, and those trained teachers would in turn train new teachers themselves, who will then train another new group of teachers, and so on. This model proved to be highly ineffective, based on inadequate management and communication. Teachers were taught new methods but not how to teach them, so the knowledge transmitted to their colleagues depreciated every time the training was replicated. Teachers who successfully trained their peers were often diverted from their classroom obligations and more concentrated on training other teachers.

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16

The continuing need for follow-up is cited consistently. Regardless of the quantity and quality of in-service seminars, training evaluations continue to reflect a seemingly undeniable truth: teachers generally will not apply what they have learned during in-service training. This reality is more apparent in those programs without a knowledge base of what teachers need. When teachers are not asked directly what might interest them or what they need to learn, courses are not practical or helpful, and in-service training fails its purpose. The most successful experiences are directly linked to providing useful training for teachers and helping them with the transition from theory to classroom practice. In-service training does not serve its purpose unless teachers are monitored and given classroom-level technical assistance for weeks and months following the completion of training.

In-service training programs also continue to struggle with the prevailing notion that they detract too much from already limited classroom hours. What seems apparent is that training must be of such high caliber as to quell any argument about classrooms being left empty.

These perceptions of in-service training, along with relatively high costs of travel, materials, lunches, hotel rooms, etc., have unfortunately contributed to the downsizing of many such programs. As can be seen across the region, were it not for international donor contributions, few in-service training efforts would survive. Regardless, several countries have fully suspended in-service training, due primarily to budget constraints.

Learning from the experience and the failures of the past in teacher in-service training, new trends of more effective training are starting to flourish in the region. These new trends are based on the concept of developing a systemic approach for training, based on the realities of the school as a whole, teachers as a professional body with specific policies that support professional development, and training as a continuous need throughout the professional life of a teacher. These new trends rescue approaches such as the "cascade" and improve them by involving a trainer of trainers as the main link between one group of trainees and the other, as well as providing the training for the school as a system instead of individual teachers.

Against this amalgam of advances and retreats in training, the assessment clearly delineated a variety of educational needs that require attention today if classroom teaching is to meet the demands of an increasingly competitive world tomorrow. These needs are outlined in the section below.

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17

B.   Specific Training Needs

To help pave the way for the design phase of the Centers of Excellence, the following training needs were gleaned from interviews with ministry officials, international donor personnel, teachers, parents, and school directors and supervisors throughout the region:

1. Evaluating Student Performance.

Teachers must be taught new ways to assess student progress, especially in reading. In too many instances, teachers measure accomplishments once or twice a year with instruments that do not adequately reflect what the student knows. Consequently, neither students, teachers or parents can be apprised of appropriate corrective actions. Without clearly identifying problems, it is difficult to prescribe solutions. Reflective pedagogy and action research provide teachers with the tools for a rapid assessment. With effective diagnostic tools, teachers get a clear indication of where the students are in the learning process and what direction to go with classroom instruction. Knowing these methods empowers teachers professionally, giving them guidance and control in the teaching/learning process. In this regard, excellent evaluative work was identified in the Dominican Republic where Ms. Mechy Hernandez, at the Colegio Círculo Infantil, has produced excellent, accessible guides to help teachers evaluate student performance.

2. Linking Training to Classroom Reality.

As noted earlier, pre-service training is rapidly moving from normal schools to universities. While generally regarded as positive, the good news lies more with content than with methodology. Universities are, at this stage in their involvement in education, more comfortable with theory and content than with how to achieve the practical delivery of instruction in the classroom. The attendant people skills and classroom management capabilities that a teacher must have if knowledge is to travel the crucial distance between teacher and learner need to be stressed in university programs also.

3. Enhancing Reading Readiness Abilities.

To further strengthen students' readiness to learn to read, teachers need to know more about constructivist methodologies that are defined as building on knowledge accumulated, while encouraging expanded student participation and critical thinking. The innovative programs of the Panamanian NGO Casa Taller and ILCE's Red Escolar exemplify this methodology. The latter program out of Mexico is an online educational system that gives both teachers and students the ability to download stories for use and discussion in the classroom, and to interact with the programs presented.

4. Involving the Stakeholders.

Teacher training programs should involve the teachers themselves in the design, implementation and evaluation stages. Similarly, at the pre-service or university level, college professors should be involved in dialogue with those responsible for the quality

of public education, i.e., teachers, administrators, MINED officials, so that they can gauge the utility of their university programs and determine whether all participants are unified in the understanding of and approach to educational programs.

5. Assuring Follow-up.

In too many instances, training provided to in-service teachers does not carry through once they return to their classrooms. Though costly, follow-up is seen by most interviewees as the essential ingredient required to help assure that teachers put into practice their recently learned skills. An example is the work done by UNICEF in the Dominican Republic with the Innovated Multi-Grade Program, which is a pilot program restricted to rural areas. Once teacher-training sessions are completed, facilitators follow up with visits to the schools where they observe teachers for hours. They then discuss and analyze teacher methodologies, and cite strengths and weaknesses. These visits are done periodically until teachers feel comfortable applying what they have been taught during in-service training.

6. Training for Administrators.

In a school system, all components should work together, and the quality of school principals is extremely important. Nonetheless, the assessment team research revealed that few pre-service or in-service training programs focus on administrators. Management skills, human capacity building, feedback methods, performance evaluations, strategic planning, basic budget and finance, and fundraising should be key ingredients of training for school administrators.

7. Methods and Materials for Teaching Reading.

We generally assume that teachers know how to read and thus only need to learn the methodology to teach others how to read. However, teachers living in disadvantaged areas where access to books and written materials is limited might suffer from poor reading comprehension skills themselves. These teachers may benefit from additional information and training about recent innovations in teaching reading skills and comprehension. New methodologies have been elaborated that extend beyond the traditional rote memorizing modalities. While research has been conducted, it has often been compartmentalized in an academic setting without practical applications. Continuous quality improvement of curriculum depends in part on university faculty focused on this type of research. A mechanism should be in place that would systematize the feedback between the research findings and the curriculum.

8. Norms for Curricula and Faculty Requirements.

In Guatemala, Honduras (although the GOH is moving toward requiring university training) and Nicaragua, pre-service training continues to be the responsibility of normal schools. Generally, these are specialized high schools that allow students to graduate with a teaching certificate after completing the twelfth grade. These pre-service programs

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19

follow virtually no prescribed standards for curriculum, teaching materials or faculty qualifications. Such norms are needed to assure enhanced quality for future teachers.

9. Strengthening Bilingual Programs.

Such programs are described as being rare and weak in those countries where they are needed most: Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama and Mexico. For example, of the nearly 50 normal schools in Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua, only three have any viable bilingual/cross-cultural educational components. At the same time, improvements in education programs reflect sensitivity to the values and traditions of indigenous populations. Programs like these were identified at the Universidad Nacional Pedagógica in Mexico City.

10. Utilizing Audiovisual (AV) Equipment and Materials.

In virtually all countries of the region, teachers have negligible access to audiovisual equipment. Reasons include lack of funds for such procurements, inability to safeguard equipment and teachers' lack of technical training in the use of AV materials. Also, teachers frequently feel that even the most basic AV materials—such as an educational radio program—may be a threat to their jobs. They also may feel intimidated by the technology or confused by methods that should complement, not compete with, their presence in the classroom. It has been shown that the use of AV equipment requires careful training both in using the equipment and managing the classroom environment so that materials become an effective educational tool. Although educational reforms have left a legacy of innovative AV materials, their actual use in the classrooms continues to elude many teachers.

11. Shrinking the Digital Divide.

While computer literacy and its application to teaching methodologies are being taught in certain areas and institutions region-wide, much more needs to be done. Computers can serve as an extremely effective tool in strengthening the quality of educational materials available to every child in every classroom. For this improvement to take effect, schools must have access to the required infrastructure and teachers must be trained to use computers in an effective way.

Education technology in Central America has advanced during the past decade, and excellent technology training programs for pre-service and in-service teachers have emerged region-wide, including: DGTVE, ILCE, all in Mexico; the Ciudad del Saber (City of Knowledge) in the Canal Zone in Panama; and the Technology Institute of the Americas (ITLA) in the Dominican Republic.

12. Identifying Special Needs.

Regardless of the subject matter, teachers seem to have received little if any training—in-service or pre-service—to help them identify the special needs of students. Most relevant

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20

to reading are problems related to dyslexia and poor eyesight. Autism, attention deficit disorder and post-traumatic stress syndrome also impact negatively on children's educational performance. Teachers need training in identifying such conditions, and schools require access to the therapeutic resources needed to help resolve them. Ministry programs throughout the region do not appear to address these important issues. Private-sector involvement has been wanting as well. Only one NGO in El Salvador, FUNPRES (National Foundation for Special Education), was identified as a center of information retrieval and technical assistance for students with special challenges.

13. Installing and Utilizing School Libraries.

To stimulate the culture of reading in schools, children should have access to interesting stories. Although newspapers, magazines and textbooks may be within reach, access to more entertaining stories that may pique an interest in reading is rarely available. Libraries of fiction and non-fiction that allow young people to learn, dream and experience new realities are needed. Well-managed and accessible school libraries can encourage children to learn to read. Training in the management of such libraries and the care of books is needed for this to occur.

14. Strengthening Classroom Management Skills.

With international donor support and a variety of education reform programs, in-service training has attempted to transmit better ways to teach reading. Nevertheless, more needs to be done to wean teachers from rote memory pedagogies to ones that require creative reasoning. Also, teachers need training in inviting student participation, stimulating problem-solving scenarios and moving from copying to creativity. For this to happen, training must alter both teacher attitudes and techniques. Quality master trainers and new technologies are making this happen in some countries. The Centers of Excellence can ensure that these same successes are made available to others through workshops, newsletters, a Web site or email broadcasts.

15. Learning by Doing.

Although most pre-service training institutions—normal schools or universities—require future teachers to spend time in classroom situations, the actual "practicum" time and the support of mentor teachers frequently are minimal. Both must be extended. Also, mentor teachers must be better trained to provide constructive criticism to student teachers in this context. It should be noted that there were no formal training programs for preparing mentors in the eight countries visited. Norms and evaluation instruments need to be established to address expected responsibilities and roles of student teachers and their mentors.

C. Summary/Analysis of Training Needs

Although both pre-service and in-service teachers expressed interest in additional training, in-service teachers appeared to have the greatest need. This is somewhat

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21

expected since in-service teachers have spent several years in the classroom and have firsthand knowledge about their teaching strengths and weaknesses.

There is a need to strengthen teaching methods rather than content. As noted earlier, teachers generally know how to read, but frequently cannot teach others to read. The Center of Excellence could provide the venue in which such teaching deficiencies could be researched and resolved with specialized programming. An unknown percentage of teachers may even need to be trained in reading comprehension themselves before they can teach others how to read.

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22

IV.   INSTITUTIONAL PROFILES

A.   Introduction

To help determine which organizations may be involved in the Center of Excellence, teams visited NGOs, universities and normal schools in eight countries in the region. These sites were selected based on information provided by research team members, recommendations from the ministries of education and USAID missions, and contacts in other development organizations. Profiles of all institutions visited are included in the country reports in Annex 5.

Table 7. List of Visited Institutions

Universities (private and public)	▪ Instituto Centroamericano de Administración de Empresas (INCAE), Nicaragua ▪ Instituto Tecnológico de Santo Domingo (INTEC), Dominican Republic ▪ Pontificia Universidad Católica Madre y Maestra (PUCMM), Dominican Republic ▪ Universidad Anahuac, Mexico ▪ Universidad Autónoma de Santo Domingo (UASD), Dominican Republic ▪ Universidad Centro Americana (UCA), El Salvador ▪ Universidad de Costa Rica (UCR), Costa Rica ▪ Universidad de Don Bosco, El Salvador ▪ Universidad de El Salvador, El Salvador ▪ Universidad de San Carlos, Guatemala ▪ Universidad Estatal de Educación a Distancia (UNED), Costa Rica ▪ Universidad Ibero-Americana, Mexico ▪ Universidad Nacional (UNA), Costa Rica ▪ Universidad Nacional Autónoma de León, Nicaragua ▪ Universidad Nacional de Panama (UNP), Panama ▪ Universidad Pedagógica Nacional (UPN), Honduras ▪ Universidad Pegagógica Nacional (UPN), Mexico. ▪ Universidad Rafael Landivar (URL), Guatemala ▪ Universidad Tecnológica de Panama (UTEP), Panama ▪ Universidad Urracan, Nicaragua ▪ Universidad del Valle de Guatemala, Guatemala
Educational Institutions: ▪ NGOs ▪ Non-profit Institutions ▪ Normal Schools	▪ Benemerita Escuela Nacional de Maestros (BENM), Mexico ▪ Centro Alfa, El Salvador ▪ Centro de Aprendizaje Mayacam, Guatemala ▪ EDUQUEMOS, Nicaragua ▪ Escuela Normal de Juan de León, Guatemala ▪ Escuela Normal de León, Nicaragua ▪ Escuela Normal Pedro Molina, Guatemala ▪ Escuela Normal Santa Lucía Utatlan in Sololá, Guatemala ▪ Franklin D. Roosevelt Normal School, Honduras ▪ Fundación Empresarial para le Desarrollo Internacional (FEPADE), El Salvador ▪ Fundación Omar Dengo, Costa Rica ▪ FUNPRES, El Salvador ▪ IDEUCA, Nicaragua ▪ Instituto Tecnológico de las Américas, Dominican Republic ▪ La Ciudad del Saber, Panama

In order to select the institutions that would be recommended for follow-up assessment, an instrument was developed to assess the potential of the institutions to host the Center of Excellence.

Methodology

The team developed a set of criteria to classify those institutions that could be considered to be the host of the Center. Two criteria were considered to be *sine qua non* requirements:

- Internal Administrative and Management Capacity

  Indicators:
  - General condition of the physical plant, including status of office equipment, experience and attitude of employees, reviews of annual report and written evaluations of projects by third parties, consistency and quality of board of directors.

- Financial Oversight and Contract/Grant Competence

  Indicators:
  - Number and type of grants managed during the past five years with donor organizations, review of financial statements in annual reports and of annual audit reports, and status of fundraising activities.

In addition, another ten criteria were identified as potentially important. The criteria with their indicators are presented in Table 8.

Table 8: Criteria

1. Experience training in-service and/or pre-service teachers *Indicators:* ▪ Review training courses
2. Experience creating and managing education technology programs *Indicators:* ▪ Review of technology programs created ▪ Verification visit to ICT departments
3. Regional credibility and experience in managing projects *Indicators:* ▪ Commentary from interviews and focus groups ▪ Visibility in countries visited
4. Experience in research and policy formulation

Basic Education and Policy Support (BEPS) Activity
Creative Associates International, Inc.

24

Indicators:
▪ Commentary from ministry officials regarding the participation of the institution in the genesis of changes in educational policies in recent years
5. Interest in hosting and supporting a Center of Excellence   *Indicators:*
▪ Responses to questions posed by researchers
6. Budgetary considerations   *Indicators:*
▪ Comments of development agencies that have provided grants or loans to the institutions profiled
7. Experience with beneficiary populations in rural areas   *Indicators:*
▪ Revision of programs and projects developed for working with teachers in economically disadvantaged areas.
8. Experience obtaining counterpart contributions   *Indicators:*
▪ Review characteristics of board members   ▪ Information about contributors and financial statements included in annual reports
9. Experience in social marketing and advocacy   *Indicators:*
▪ Review of annual plans   ▪ Observations of media presentations, brochures or newspaper accounts   ▪ Commentary from disinterested third parties in donor agencies or in the ministry of education
10. Experience in community mobilization and grassroots development   *Indicators:*
▪ Review recent project and activities that indicate specific development efforts with grassroots organizations such as schools, cooperatives or municipalities   ▪ Commentary from members of national and international development agencies who are generally apprised of the key players in local development programs in rural areas

In order to qualify the institutions,

1. Each criterion was given a weight, generally a value of 5, 10, or 15—with the total weight adding up to a potential of 100. Team members assigned a weight to each of the criteria relative to their perception of relevance to the Center.

2. Grades from one to five[4] were assigned by team members in order to measure the institutional performance on each aspect.

3. The grade was then multiplied by the weight to provide the full value awarded for all of the criteria (a perfect score would have yielded 500 points).

4. Institutions were assigned a score based on the summary. All institutions should be regarded as having potentially important resources for the Center of Excellence.

B. Institutional Profiles: Preliminary Ratings

Using the above-mentioned criteria, ten institutions were rated. Ratings in each of the categories as well as the summary rating score are provided in Table 9.

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[4] In this case, 1 is the lowest grade, equivalent to an F, and 5 is the higher grade, equivalent to an A.

Table 9: Institutional Ratings

Institutions	Exp. Teacher Training	ICT	Regional Credibility/ Exp/ Infra-structure	Exp. Research / Policy Making	Motivation to Support Centers	Budgetary Considerations	Experience with Beneficiaries	Counterpart Contribution	Exp. Social Marketing / Advocacy	Exp. Community Mob./ Grassroots Develop.	TOTAL
	Weight: 15	Weight:15	Weight:10	Weight: 5	Weight: 15	Weight: 10	Weight: 5	Weight: 15	Weight: 5	Weight: 5	Weight: 100
ILCE (ME)	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	4	490
	75	75	50	25	75	50	25	75	20	20	
INCAE (CR, NIC)	3	5	5	5	4	5	5	5	3	3	435
	45	75	50	25	60	50	25	75	15	15	
FEPADE (ES)	5	3	5	5	5	4	3	3	4	4	410
	75	45	50	25	75	40	15	45	20	20	
Fund. Dengo (CR)	5	5	5	4	5	3	5	2	2	3	405
	75	75	50	20	75	30	25	30	10	15	
Universidad del Valle (GT)	5	5	3	3	5	1	4	4	5	1	380
	75	75	30	15	75	10	20	60	25	5	
UPN (HO)	5	4	3	4	3	4	4	4	4	5	350
	75	60	30	20	45	30	15	30	20	25	
Ciudad del Saber (PN)	3	5	2	1	4	3	2	3	2	3	330
	45	75	20	5	60	30	10	45	25	15	
INTEC (DR)	5	3	3	4	5	2	5	1	2	3	330
	75	45	30	20	75	20	25	15	10	15	
FUNRURAL (GT)	5	2	2	3	4	4	4	3	2	2	325
	75	30	20	15	60	40	20	45	10	10	
ITLA (DR)	3	5	2	2	3	3	2	3	2	2	300
	45	75	20	10	45	30	10	45	10	10	

Basic Education and Policy Support (BEPS) Activity
Creative Associates International, Inc.

27

V. RECOMMENDED INSTITUTIONS FOR FOLLOW-UP ASSESSMENT

Based on the methodology outlined in Section IV, the team is recommending that, as a minimum, the top six institutions identified in Table 6 be included in a follow-up assessment. These institutions are:

- ILCE (Instituto Latinoamericano de la Comunicación Educativa/Latin American Institute of Educational Communication), Mexico

- INCAE (Instituto Centroamericano de Administración de Empresas/Central American Institute of Business Administration), Costa Rica

- FEPADE (Fundación Empresarial para el Desarrollo Educativo/Business Foundation for Educational Development), El Salvador

- FOD (Fundación Omar Dengo), Costa Rica

- UVG (Universidad del Valle de Guatemala)

- UPN (Universidad Pedagógica Nacional/National Pedagogical University), Honduras

A. ILCE (Instituto Latinoamericano de Comunicación Educativa/Latin American Institute of Educational Communication), Mexico

1. Institutional Overview

ILCE is an international membership organization that has developed and disseminated research in educational technology and communication to the Latin American region for more than 40 years. ILCE's main objectives include the use of effective educational tools and the diffusion of new alternative educational models and resources to keep pace with constant change in education and technology. It uses television, computing, audiovisual materials, and the Internet to provide the type of curriculum desired in preparing pre-service and in-service teacher training. ILCE offers courses and certificate degrees. ILCE is a powerhouse in distance education programs and has an incredible repository of technological material. In the next five years of its mandate, it plans to design 167,583 electronic pages to support its existing educational network.

The institute was conceived in 1954, when the Latin American countries granted their support for the creation of a regional organization that would contribute to the improvement of education through the use of audiovisual media and resources. In 1956, under the support of the United Nations Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the organization was founded in Mexico City as the Latin American Educational Film Institute. In 1969, the organization broadened its functions and changed its name to the

Basic Education and Policy Support (BEPS) Activity
Creative Associates International, Inc.

28

Latin American Institute for Educational Communication. In 1978, the organization was restructured again to redirect its activities towards the strengthening of regional cooperation in the fields of technology and educational and cultural communication. Throughout the years, the focus has been the use audiovisual media and resources that help apply information technology in education.

ILCE serves many countries, including Bolivia, Columbia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay and Venezuela. It also maintains ties to UNESCO, UNICEF, UNDP, OAS, PAHO, and CREFAL, among others, and it fosters cooperation between member and non-member countries. ILCE also closely collaborates with regional entities. Its fields of research include curricular design, nonformal and formal distance education, the use of media in education and strategies in teaching and learning. ILCE takes great pride in its documentation center, CECTE, which is a center for educational technology and communication studies. This center offers courses of specialization, post-graduate degrees, diplomas and workshops. The idea is to back up research carried out in the institute and offer a venue for exchange with other institutions specializing in different educational technology fields.

The distance education program comprises a series of different initiatives, among them the Educational Television Satellite Network (EDUSAT), which works jointly with DGTVE, and the School Network of Educational Information Technology (known as Red Escolar). The Red Escolar, which is the school educational computing network, is a central initiative of the distance education program. The network offers computer and pedagogical services using the Internet in order to facilitate interaction and collaboration between schools, teacher training colleges, and any other organization involved in education. This educational model combines the use of educational television with computer education, through access to the EDUSAT satellite network and the Internet.

The reading program at Red Escolar is a series of educational projects that are designed around key themes, one of which is Language and Literature. One of the projects in this area is called "Tell Me a Story," designed for primary-school children. Children are chosen in pairs from other schools and assigned stories. Through the network, children discuss, interpret and share opinions as they carry out various activities. This program is for the early primary grades. Red Escolar has in its Internet collection, "Corner Books", which are stories for primary school and beginning junior high students.

In addition, reading programs such as *"¿Te lo cuento otra vez?"* (Shall I tell you again?) are designed to motivate students to have fun reading through stories, myths, informative text and interactive activities. Children are grouped into "circles of learning" and they gather to discuss and write down ideas. Each learning team has a name. The activity aims to promote reading comprehension.

EDUSAT has a reading program for children in the pre-kinder level using the tale of a magical place called La Casa de Wimzie (The House of Wimzie), where children can learn to know themselves, their family and friends in a creative and entertaining way.

The background is warm and friendly with music and stories. Each child is taken through adventures, discoveries, and experiments. Through it all, each child feels a part of the family formed by Wimzie, Yaya, Rouso, Graciela, Bo, Jonas, Lulu and Horacio. The program airs Monday through Friday from 10am to 10:30 am.

ILCE established an agreement with the Ministry of Education (SEP—Secretaría de Educación Pública) to play a central role in the implementation of the distance education program. The Mexican government has given this program top priority. There are 36 million Mexican adults that for one reason or another have dropped out of school at age 15 or older. Through a two-way satellite, the program is intended to reach the 2,443 municipalities in the country and serve as many Mexican students and teachers as possible in 20,000 communities. Fundamental to this program is the in-service training of teachers, enabling them to better serve the schools and society.

The *diplomado* certificate, which services 2,000 teachers each year, offers courses via workshops ranging from 40 to 65 hours. For teachers that cannot afford transportation to the municipal sites, the OAS funds travel and the SEP offers per diem. The courses are free of charge. Among the courses offered are:

- Education of the Media, a package for primary teachers.
- Educating for the Future, a course on how to use technology in education that was given to 7,000 basic education teachers.
- Certification and Training in Basic Computer Skills.
- On EDUSAT, courses for subject areas, such as reading, math, science, etc.
- Summer courses under the National Permanent Training Program (PRONAP), which offers courses for 24 hours per week for 8 weeks on TV channel 16.
- For principals in Mexico City, a training course in school administration.
- For teachers and administrators, a course called Sepa Ingles (Learn English) on TV channels 12 and 14.

Every two months free of charge, ILCE edits, publishes and distributes to users of EDUSAT 34,000 copies of its magazine that presents the whole range of programs transmitted on the system's nine channels.

Teacher training and skills updating are also important to Red Escolar. Teachers in charge of school media rooms are given technical training in order to understand the technology they will use with students. Coupled with these courses are pedagogy courses that help teachers analyze the proposed models. These media-room teachers then pass on their knowledge to other teachers in their schools. Initial training includes an on-site workshop, followed by remote support. There are on-line courses for teachers in information technology and key pedagogy courses. They usually cover a range of topics based on the new approaches established by the Ministry of Education study programs.

Funding for this institution includes 50 percent federal funds, 30 to 40 percent local funds and 10 percent community funds.

Basic Education and Policy Support (BEPS) Activity
Creative Associates International, Inc.

30

The institute has had a proven management and financial track record since its inception. It has realized immense levels of growth and is still expanding. Its impressiveness lies in the fact that all of the services are free of charge, with the exception of the products ILCE produces in video, cassette and CD-ROM form.

2. Rationale for Recommendation

With over 40 years of experience,

- ILCE has a proven capacity for training teachers and students via distance education, an approach that is strongly recommended for training teachers in rural areas;
- ILCE has the infrastructure for successfully conducting distance training programs and a tested training program for teaching reading;
- Through its membership affiliations, ILCE is already providing technical services to other Latin American countries;
- The institute also has a proven management and financial track record; and
- The chief officers of the institute voiced a very keen interest and desire to be the host of the Center of Excellence.

B. INCAE (Instituto Centroamericano de Administración de Empresas/Central American Institute of Business Administration), Costa Rica

1. Institutional Overview

INCAE, which has its principal offices and campus in Costa Rica and a second campus in Nicaragua, is a private, non-profit, multinational institution of higher learning founded in 1964. INCAE began operations with a loan from USAID and support from the private sector. Its mission is to provide postgraduate study in management and business administration. In addition, INCAE conducts research in regional economic development.

The International Association for Management Education and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools accredit INCAE, which is also affiliated with the National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration. It is the only institution of higher education outside the U.S. that is eligible for federal student loans by the U.S. Department of Education. INCAE is closely associated with the Harvard University Graduate School of Business.

INCAE was originally founded in Managua, Nicaragua, and moved its principal headquarters to San José, Costa Rica after the start of the Nicaraguan Civil War in the 1980s. The Nicaraguan center was maintained throughout the conflict. Presently, both centers operate fully. The organization has a policy to admit no more than 15 percent of its student population from any one country.

The research component of the organization is comprised of approximately 30 full-time researchers who conduct regional studies critical for development and provide a platform

for dialogue between the political and economic leaders in Central America. Since education in the region has been found to be one of the most important factors for development, a good portion of this research has centered on this area.

INCAE has created CLACDS, Centro Latinoamericano para la Competitividad y Desarrollo Sostenible (Latin American Center for Competitiveness and Sustainable Development), a think tank financed with resources from the Central American Bank for Economic Integration and the AVINA Foundation. This new research and program development center has spotlighted primary educational issues in the Central American region as its priority. The initiative is part of a reorientation of INCAE's mission, which focuses on fomenting sustainable development. Although INCAE is known more for teaching young, aspiring and established entrepreneurs than teachers, that is soon to change. Rather than continue traditional pre-service or in-service teaching, the university is exploring the concept of leadership in teachers and approaching education with the operative assumption that what is taught at the moment will be obsolete by the time the student hits the marketplace.

INCAE is preparing to launch a program called the Central American Agenda for the XXI Century within CLACDS. In this model, there will be clusters—geographic concentrations of interrelated businesses, specialized suppliers, service providers, public institutions and private associations—in various fields of competition and cooperation. Its purpose is to be a catalyst for leaders of Central American nations who, along with academic institutions, seek to promote competitiveness and development goals for sustainability. INCAE officials expressed interest in the Center of Excellence as a potential vehicle to promote theories of change and to imbue future educators with a new vision of the future, i.e., a way of assuming new challenges and reaching solutions and innovations that keep the region competitive and sustainable.

INCAE maintains business offices in every Central American country, the Dominican Republic and other countries in Latin America. It operates as a collaborating institution with Harvard and MIT. With these linkages, INCAE is extending its management capacity and experience to several new initiatives, including an alliance with IBM, Lego Toy Corporation and other firms in a Digital Nations Consortium.

INCAE is also active in community development programs in support of education, especially with the Triangle of Solidarity Project in Costa Rica, which assigns 20 percent of domestic investment resources to be managed and operated by local communities. A third program vector in primary education is INCAE's involvement with Fe y Alegría, a faith-based organization which would extend its programs throughout the developing world as a model for teacher training and classroom management.

2. Rationale for Recommendation

INCAE merits consideration as the administrative entity to manage the Center of Excellence, perhaps as a prime contractor to oversee other components of the Center. This is based on the following qualifications:

Basic Education and Policy Support (BEPS) Activity
Creative Associates International, Inc.

32

- Considerable experience administering grants from international donors and could thus be relied on to ensure accountability and contract compliance.
- Credibility and recognition throughout Central America as a leader of educational innovations.
- INCAE's new education-based philosophy could well serve the Center in its role of promoting quality of teaching, improved performance and educational innovations.

C.   Fundación Omar Dengo, Costa Rica

1. Institutional Overview

The Omar Dengo Foundation (FOD) in San José, Costa Rica is a lead institution in the application of ICT to strengthen the quality of education and learning in the classroom. To a large extent, FOD is a pioneer in many of the tasks generally proposed for the Centers of Excellence; its programs directly impact the quality of teaching at the classroom level.

FOD technical expertise in education technology, coupled with 14 years of experience in teacher training and enhancement of classroom instruction, could be invaluable in the design and implementation of the Central America Center of Excellence. The quality of the FOD program and its leadership is widely acknowledged by educators interviewed in Costa Rica and Panama. Also, FOD has been called upon to provide technical assistance to programs in several Latin American countries, most recently in Chile and Ecuador.

FOD was founded in 1987 by a group of Costa Rican intellectuals and business leaders to help strengthen the country's education system. Currently, it enjoys a long list of national and international contributors, notably the Costa Rica Central Bank, through a debt swap arrangement. Motorola Corporation recently donated land to provide FOD with much-needed space for the construction of a new training center in Costa Rica.

The FOD is headed by education and technology professionals with graduate degrees from the United States. The FOD team acknowledges as its mentor the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), particularly Professor Seymour Papert of the Learning and Epistemology Group with whom FOD has maintained an active partnership since the late 1980s.

Two closely related activities of FOD are of special relevance to this report: the Red Telemática Educativa (ICT Educational Network) and the Programa de Informática Educativa. The Red Telemática Educativa is a telecommunications initiative aimed at improving Costa Rican schools. This project, which complements FOD's ICT education program, creates a communications network to promote innovation through interaction in the Costa Rican education system. Members can develop projects and access information through the network.

Basic Education and Policy Support (BEPS) Activity
Creative Associates International, Inc.

33

The project also focuses on connectivity and providing email, instant messaging, videoconferencing, search engines and the publication of educational productions. As part of the project, an educational e-magazine, *Nuevo Milenio*, was created through the collaboration of five schools and a university in Costa Rica.

FOD's ICT Education Program (Programa de Informática Educativa) was developed in 1988 in cooperation with Costa Rica's Ministry of Education. Through this program, computer labs are built in public schools that serve underprivileged students. To date, computers have been installed in 494 of these schools and will increase to 540 in 2002. Technology training and conferences for teachers are also offered as part of the program.

Seven hundred and fifty teacher-tutors, especially trained and supervised by FOD technicians, run the program at the school level. To date, over 254,000 school children have benefited from the FOD program (over 50 percent of the total school-age population) and close to 15,000 teachers.

The program utilizes diverse levels of connectivity available in Costa Rica. The basic commuted connectivity telephone/modem is still in use at 180 schools and is being introduced to schools through a CISCO Corporation donation. Thus far, 35 schools have obtained this system. Dedicated lines with voice and data capability are being introduced through EDUNET, the MINED's school connectivity program. Twenty-five schools have already accessed this system, and 55 are in the process of coming online.

2. Rationale for Recommendation

The Fundación Omar Dengo offers several attributes for the CETT. The school has a reputation for:

- innovation in using ICT to strengthen the quality of education,
- work focused on the classroom level, and
- delivery of educational services to other countries.

D. FEPADE (Fundación Empresarial para el Desarrollo Educativo/Business Foundation for Educational Development), El Salvador

1. Institutional Profile

Located in El Salvador, FEPADE comprises 48 private companies dedicated to the support of Salvadoran education. While the principal focus of its programs has been vocational-technical education, FEPADE has had a long-term affiliation with USAID through five ITCA (Central American Technology Institute) centers.

Among the most notable of FEPADE's activities is its support of El Salvador's educational reform. FEPADE served as a USAID contractor in carrying out three components of the national reform:

Basic Education and Policy Support (BEPS) Activity
Creative Associates International, Inc.

34

- research directed at strengthening local resources to conduct educational policy reform,
- training for trainers of change agents who would promote educational reforms at the national and local levels, and
- dialogue and communication dissemination of educational system reforms.

FEPADE surpassed project targets, and the organization has been able to consolidate its national leadership role to the point of maintaining an US $11 million endowment fund to support programs. FEPADE has the financial and program management capability to execute contracts directly with international donors. It includes in its sponsor/contract list, inter alia, USAID, the World Bank, IDB and the Ministry of Education.

Working with El Salvador's Ministry of Education, FEPADE has been involved in the expansion of seven Centros de Recursos para el Aprendizaje or CRAs (Learning Resource Centers) for secondary education. The CRAs will use provide in-service teacher training programs and products using a variety of distance education modalities. These centers may serve as possible resources or national models to replicate in other countries via the Center of Excellence.

With respect to reading development, FEPADE has engaged the *Prensa Gráfica*, a national newspaper, to publish a section each week especially for beginning readers. The section is designed to complement the national curriculum, especially for first-grade students, and is available to teachers at a very low cost. FEPADE also publishes a magazine for technical support of teachers.

FEPADE has been instrumental in a massive national campaign to solicit books for school libraries. FEPADE has organized and involved the private sector in community- and education-based programs through donations and/or in-kind contributions for training and development. The organization, in coordination with the Ministry of Education, was responsible for creating the Campaña de Libros (Campaign for Books) program, which sought private-sector book donations for schools.

FEPADE has been planning the creation of a teacher training institute. In the initial planning phase of the project, this entity has created a pilot project with training seminars for teachers and has performed some informal evaluations of this phase with favorable results. The organization is also working with national banks to create model schools and to provide empirical and theoretical training to teachers in 18 isolated communities throughout the country. Finally, FEPADE has received funding from the World Bank to create CRAs, which concentrate on providing technological resources for the country's education system. The project is coordinated through the Ministry of Education.

MINED and USAID recognize FEPADE as one of the leading education and training organizations in El Salvador. The organization's financial accountability has been transparent and responsible without any deviations or irregularities. It has maintained this status throughout its existence and enforces a strict surveillance over the administration

Basic Education and Policy Support (BEPS) Activity
Creative Associates International, Inc.

35

of all funds. Few of its peers have performed as well, especially over such a long history of receiving funding and providing services.

FEPADE should be considered a key organization for information and guidance about strengthening linkages between the education and private sectors. The organization's council, whose members serve voluntarily and are not reimbursed for their efforts, is a strong and influential group of private-sector representatives who are passionate about education, training and development. They also are highly knowledgeable about community-development programs and policies, and communication and public relations skills.

2. Rationale for Recommendation

FEPADE is recommended as a candidate based on the following:

- The involvement of the private sector is highly desirable for creating and sustaining a Center of Excellence, and FEPADE may serve as an excellent partner to develop private-sector participation.

E.   Universidad del Valle, Guatemala

1. Institutional Overview

Universidad del Valle was built primarily with USAID funding. It is a large modern university situated in a forest-like setting with large pines and ample gardens. The modern buildings of the university are situated on nearly 50 acres of land. The university's classrooms are equipped with mobile dividers, accommodating varying numbers of students.

The university enrolls roughly 4,000 students. Its 52,000-book library is large and has approximately 15 computers online. The university also has a multimedia center with videoconferencing capabilities, and one medium and one large auditorium. The university houses out-of-town students in off-campus settings. The American School of Guatemala is located immediately adjacent to the university and serves as an on-site, on-the-job pre-service training site for education majors, similar to a laboratory school. The American School is large and includes preschool through high-school academic levels. It is also situated on a large campus setting with approximately 15 separate academic and administrative buildings. The American School also has a multimedia center and a computer center with access to the Internet.

The university offers a *profesorado* (equivalent to an associate's degree in teaching) in primary education (Primary Education and Bilingual Intercultural Primary Education), and in special education, among other concentrations. Though most teachers in Guatemala receive their certificate during their secondary education, 95 percent of the university students are current teachers receiving in-service training.

Basic Education and Policy Support (BEPS) Activity
Creative Associates International, Inc.

36

The in-service programs start from the teachers' needs, receiving feedback from analysis and observations during the follow-up phase. The university also organizes events and develops materials in connection with the in-service training. The program places a strong emphasis on critical thinking, teaching methodologies for reading and math, and the need to use didactic materials to support the process.

In 1997, Del Valle University signed an agreement with the Ministry of Education for the establishment of the National School Evaluation Program (PRONERE). Each year, the institution participates in a nationwide evaluation of reading and math in grades 3-6, enabling the MINED to compare performance at the national, state and municipal levels.

2. Rationale for Recommendation

Although USAID and the Ministry of Education showed no official partiality toward any Guatemalan university, informal discussions reflected a strong preference for the Del Valle University. This university has:

- a long, positive history as a reliable contractor for international development agencies, such as USAID;
- solid management in Roberto Moreno, a former Minister of Education and USAID staff person; and
- experience in education and ICT capabilities.

F. UPN (Universidad Pedagógica Nacional/National Pedagogical University), Honduras

1. Institutional Overview

Universidad Pedagógica Nacional-Francisco Morazán is the primary institution for non-primary teacher training in Honduras. The school, created by legislative mandate, has a student population of about 18,000 on three campuses throughout the country.

UPN has post-graduate programs offering master's degrees in curriculum development, education, geography, educational development, educational mathematics, and gender and education studies. It also operates a foundation, FUNDAUPN, which has offered training events in both formal and informal education on a national scale. The program has trained 6,500 in-service teachers, as well as professionals from NGOs and governmental organizations.

UPN has an evaluation department and a department for curricular development. The objectives of the latter are to improve the quality of education through the design, planning, promotion and development of the university's curricula. From these objectives a Plan for Curricula Improvement has been created along with a manual for implementation. This process includes research to determine:

- learning styles of pre-service students,

Basic Education and Policy Support (BEPS) Activity
Creative Associates International, Inc.

37

- teaching styles of pre-service students, and
- research of practicum and curricular guidelines.

The evaluation department has created and administered testing instruments to measure academic objectives reached in Spanish and mathematics in grades 2-6. Evaluation results provide information about academic performance and related critical factors. Test results led to the creation of a didactic plan for improving the Spanish and mathematics curricula, and for providing innovative in-service training programs in these subject areas.

The university is developing an Internet link to connect all its campuses. Services will include access to the Web, email, FTP in both directions, an online application for admission, access to restricted areas, academic portals, and videoconferencing.

UPN retains a virtual monopoly on advanced-degree teacher training. It alone has the authority to award certificates or degrees beyond the *maestro* license, which is awarded by the normal schools. UPN training programs are directed toward teachers either seeking other posts or wanting to move into secondary education.

Under new direction, the university is offering a new, experimental *técnico* program (funded entirely by the Cooperación Española), the *profesorado* (two years of college after normal school), the *licenciatura* (four years of college after normal school) and the *maestría,* which is a graduate school program.

UPN is now actively involved in the design and implementation of a new policy that will require all teachers to complete two years of university training *(profesorado)*. In order to extend the *profesorado* program to all regions of Honduras, UPN is selecting four *escuelas normales* to serve as satellite centers. Some 1,200 teachers are expected to receive training during the two-year pilot phase of the *profesorado* program. The next step will require all new, incoming students to complete two years of university training before being certified as teachers.

a. Distance Education Programs

The university trains primary school teachers via distance education programs on two tracks:

- One program of continuing education is aimed at in-service teachers who have degrees from normal schools. This two-year program gives in-service teachers a more advanced degree: *Técnico Universitario en Educación Básica* (University Technician in basic education). After 2002, teachers will also be able to obtain the degree of *Licenciado en Educación Básica* (bachelor's degree in basic education).

- Another special program is *Formación Docente*, or teacher preparation, also for graduates of specialized secondary education programs in normal schools.

Students in this program may be in-service teachers, school administrators, or employed elsewhere. This program also takes two years, after which the title of *Técnico Universitario* is awarded. Students can major in school administration, education technology, special education, or preschool education.

UPN also prepares secondary-school teachers with both on-campus (*presencial*) and distance education programs. These are four-year programs of study that lead to a degree entitled, *Profesorado en Educación Media* (professor of secondary education), which is the equivalent of a bachelor's degree. With this degree, teachers are qualified to teach high-school special education, preschool education, administration, social sciences, Spanish, English, or French.

Graduate programs are also taught at UPN. On-campus programs include master's degrees in curriculum, geography, and educational management and administration.

Distance education programs at the post-graduate level are provided in cooperation with the Universidad Tecnológica Centroaméricano (UNITEC) and the Instituto Tecnológica de Monterrey in Mexico. Master's degrees in education are awarded in various specialty areas.

b. Courses in Reading and Writing

Specific courses to prepare teachers to provide instruction in reading and writing (*lecto-escritura*) include semantics, lexicology, psycholinguistics, basic research projects, how to identify and treat reading problems, stages in the development of literacy skills, and innovative methodologies for teaching children to read and write.

UPN's Testing and Evaluation Unit has prepared and applied national-level tests to determine children's reading and comprehension skills in Spanish. Based on results from this testing program, UPN has conducted research on the factors associated with test results in primary schools.

UPN's School of Research is currently conducting research on the application and impact of methodologies that are called "natural" because they build on the participation and personal experiences of children with a constructivist focus.

c. In-service Teacher Training

Training for in-service teachers also accounts for a major portion of UPN's academic endeavors. The training is not only for teachers, but also for in-service principals, assistant principals, school secretaries, directors of school districts, and state or departmental educational administrators. Specific continuing education programs for these professionals include nonformal preschool certificates for day-care workers, educational quality, education administration, teaching methodologies for teachers in secondary education, and evaluative methods.

Basic Education and Policy Support (BEPS) Activity
Creative Associates International, Inc.

39

Specialized courses for in-service teachers also are provided in environmental sciences, community development, bilingual education, and educational facilitation. As noted earlier, most in-service programs at UPN are presented through televised distance learning programs. Monitoring activities, meetings with graduates, and micro-teaching seminars are held during occasional visits to secondary and tertiary cities throughout Honduras.

d. Funding and Agreements

Although nearly all UPN funding is derived from the federal government, the university also has the right to sign contracts and other agreements with national and international development agencies. In recent years, UPN has had agreements with UNESCO, the World Bank, UNICEF, World Vision and Plan International.

Given the innovative programs being developed and the level of enthusiasm for educational reforms, UPN is an institution of higher education to be considered for the Center of Excellence.

2. Rationale for Recommendation

UPN offers excellent potential as a host institution for the Center and is recommended for additional study in light of the following qualifications:

▪ Vast experience in education at both the graduate and undergraduate levels. Especially in recent years, UPN has been very involved in designing programs to improve teachers' skills from the current normal-school level. (In addition, Honduras's teachers' union, committed to improving the quality of education for in-service teachers, promises to provide excellent support through its established training network).

Basic Education and Policy Support (BEPS) Activity
Creative Associates International, Inc.

40

VI.   COUNTRY CAPACITY

A.   Introduction

The assessment team considered the capacity of the Central American countries to support the Center of Excellence. An analysis of Mexico's capacity was not considered necessary because the Center will not be located in that country.

B.   Specific Questions

1. Who has responsibility for teacher training activities?

1a. In-service training

In nearly all countries where in-service teacher training programs are provided, the Ministry of Education is the agency ultimately responsible for designing, implementing, and evaluating these efforts. Many countries have reduced such programs due to budget limitations.

In Panama, in-service training is, in reality, an extension of pre-service training because teachers earn credits toward a university degree in teaching by attending summer programs for working teachers.

El Salvador's recent initiative replaces school supervisors, who were involved primarily in administrative chores, with *asesores pedagógicos* or teaching advisers, to provide in-service training at the school and classroom level to teachers in their school districts.

1b. Pre-service training

Many countries do little to establish normative requirements for curriculum, evaluations, or learning standards for pre-service training. Four countries—Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Panama and El Salvador—are now fully committed to training future teachers solely in universities following satisfactory completion of high school.

The remaining three countries are still involved in the traditional normal-school programs that permit a person to teach after completing twelfth grade. The normal school, in effect, is a type of specialized high-school program in grades 9 through 12 that prepares future teachers.

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41

2. Possibilities of financial support for the Centers

The private sector provided considerable support to education initiatives in these countries. The business community is especially sensitive to human capacity needs and issues; without personnel who have the capability to adjust rapidly to changing technology, businesses will soon find themselves without qualified personnel.

Furthermore, without the ability to make reasoned and reasonable buying decisions, consumers can skew marketing plans and make sales forecasting and attendant manufacturing an impossible task. Within this context, many business executives are now increasing support, both cash and in-kind, to a variety of educational programs. Working primarily through NGOs, businesses are involved in buying books, supporting in-service training, offering scholarships, and providing equipment for communications technology.

Some examples are:

- FUNDAZUCAR, Guatemala's national foundation of sugar growers, is especially active in supporting schools in the cane cultivation regions of that country. This NGO supports in-service teacher training through the Universidad del Valle and the Ministry's PRONADE initiative related to community-governed schools, similar to EDUCO in El Salvador.
- FUNRURAL, which represents Guatemala's coffee growers, is a major NGO that supports the delivery of educational innovations such as the "active instruction" methodology.
- The Falconbridge Foundation in the Dominican Republic is actively involved in some 100 schools in the mine areas.
- FEPADE in El Salvador is made up of nearly 50 private companies that have joined forces in support of Salvadoran education.

Grants and loans from USAID, the World Bank, and the Inter-American Development Bank are potential sources of funding for teacher training through the Centers of Excellence.

3. Possibilities for partnerships with public and private institutions

As indicated above, business alliances are key to the long-term support of the Centers of Excellence.

Collaboration between the public and private sectors has been strengthened in recent years. There are several instances, as in the Dominican Republic and El Salvador, where Ministries of Education have established foundations with private-sector funds to support educational programs.

Ministries of Education expressed genuine interest in the Centers of Excellence initiative, as they recognize the need to address outstanding problems related to teacher training in order to improve the quality of education. For Central American governments, the importance of the Centers of Excellence extends also to the potential for strengthening human capacity in their countries.

4. Assess the political will of host country leaders to support reforms

Nearly all countries included in this assessment have already shown their commitment to education reforms, many having embarked on their own in the last decade.

These reforms have involved investing millions of dollars in such activities as curriculum revision programs, materials and vehicle purchases, new testing instruments, in-service training on a massive scale, library and bookmobile enhancements, and re-engineering of administrative structures that decentralize decision-making to the municipal, district, and school levels.

While much has been accomplished, more remains to be done as too many problems persist in public-school classrooms. Ministries are now admitting that, ambitious as reforms have been, most have not effectively addressed teachers' issues, largely because the political role of teachers' unions as groups of influence in society has been more threatening to governments.

Nonetheless, the ministries have admitted the need to address teachers' issues in order to achieve a measurable change in the educational system.

5. Institutional or teacher use of distance learning techniques

The City of Knowledge in Panama, the Technical Institute of the Americas in the Dominican Republic, the Omar Dengo Foundation in Costa Rica, the National Pedagogical University in Honduras, and the incredibly high-tech National Office of Educational Television in Mexico are just some of the examples of educational technology and distance learning institutions now active throughout the region.

All of them have similar goals, i.e., to produce and promote quality educational programs that can interactively educate via television, computer, and the Internet. Teachers in many of the countries are resorting to such programs as Telesecundaria to provide distance learning to students. Teachers are also accessing university-produced distance education programs for in-service training at home, which provide the means to strengthen teaching skills, while earning additional credits toward university degrees.

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43

6. Use of technology and experience to mediate the instruction process

There are solid examples in equipping classrooms with computers and training teachers in their use and the use of technology in the classroom, as in El Salvador, Costa Rica and the Dominican Republic.   In El Salvador, CRAs provide computers, laboratories, multimedia equipment and libraries to support teachers in primary and secondary schools. However, there are some isolated rural schools, often located in the most impoverished areas of the region, that have no access to electricity and no technical equipment. Many teachers are intimidated by educational technology because they have had little or no training in its use and how it can complement and enrich classroom instruction.

Some countries have a ready resource through the *InfoCentros*, community centers equipped with computers (with Internet access) and other technology that could be used to deliver teacher training.

VII. DESIGN RECOMMENDATIONS

Having returned from the field, the assessment team made the following recommendations during their final meeting in Washington, DC. These recommendations were subsequently presented to, and discussed with, USAID personnel and members of the CETT Consultative Committee on November 15, 2001.

A. Proposed Structure for the Center of Excellence for Teacher Training

Upon return from the country visits, the assessment team concluded that no single organization in Central America had all the technical expertise and institutional experience and capabilities required to run the CETT for the entire region. Therefore, the team recommended that the CETT be conceived as a network or consortium of institutions contributing their individual capabilities for the performance of the functions and services of the Center. Additionally, the network approach would ensure that the various institutional competencies and wealth of experience identified in Central America are fully tapped for the CETT operations. Aware of the dangers of a loosely defined amalgamation of players assuming a variety of roles and responsibilities, the team considers that while no single institution is deemed capable of assuming sole responsibility for all CETT functions, it is imperative that an institution with strong program management experience be identified to serve as the CETT Coordinating Institution.

Exhibit 1, which follows, is a graphic presentation of the proposed structure for the CETT. At the center of the diagram is the CETT Coordinating Institution (CI). The CI is responsible for the management of the Center's operations and will serve as a conduit for the technical services to the countries. The CETT CI will be selected from the list of candidates identified by the assessment team, based on the in-depth institutional assessment to be conducted by the follow-up assessment team.

The CETT structure is completed with the institutions specialized in the three main functions proposed for the Center:
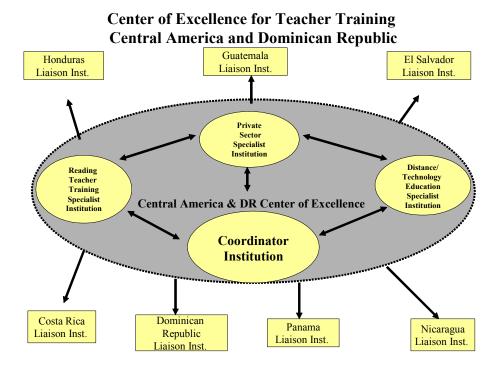
- promotion of private-sector cooperation,
- application of distance teaching and education technology, and
- teacher training, especially in reading development.

The lead institutions in charge of these three functions will be selected based on the institutional capability assessment conducted by the initial and follow-up assessment teams. Each of these functional areas is also briefly described in the following subsection.

At the country level, it is proposed that CETT Liaison Institutions (preferably an NGO such as a university or an educational foundation) be established in each of the participating countries. While the CETT Liaison Institutions will work closely with the Ministries of Education and other public agencies, an NGO is likely to enjoy greater

operational flexibility and dynamism to coordinate in-country programs. The CETT Liaison Institution will be selected from among the institutions that displayed the greatest interest and organizational capabilities during the assessment study. Other components of the country program structure will be dictated by the term of an action plan for reading development to be formulated in each participating country with the technical assistance of the CETT.

Exhibit 1: Proposed Structure for the CETT in Central America

Center of Excellence for Teacher Training
Central America and Dominican Republic

| Honduras Liaison Inst. | Guatemala Liaison Inst. | El Salvador Liaison Inst. |

Private Sector Specialist Institution

Reading Teacher Training Specialist Institution

Central America & DR Center of Excellence

Distance/ Technology Education Specialist Institution

Coordinator Institution

| Costa Rica Liaison Inst. | Dominican Republic Liaison Inst. | Panama Liaison Inst. | Nicaragua Liaison Inst. |

B.   Functions of the Center of Excellence

1. Coordination

This function falls under the responsibility of the CETT Coordinating Institution. This institution will be the main signatory of the cooperative agreement or other assistance instrument to be used for channeling USAID financing. Therefore, the institution selected will meet all the fund accounting and program management standards expected of a USAID grantee. The CETT Coordinating Institution will be the main regional counterpart of the USAID institutional contractor in charge of managing the implementation of the CETT development activity. This institution will coordinate with each of the country counterparts in the formulation and implementation of the country action plan, and will

identify and negotiate the provision of technical assistance and other services by the other members of the CETT network.

2. Private-Sector Cooperation

This function is geared to ensuring the long-term sustainability of the CETT through the active involvement and cooperation of the private sector, both nationally and regionally. Methods of working with private-sector cooperation in education, such as those used by FEPADE and the Falconbridge Foundation in the Dominican Republic, can be emulated in the rest of the region. The lead institution to perform this function will be selected from among those with a demonstrated track record in private-sector cooperation as identified in the assessment study.

3. Distance Teaching and Educational Technology

One important finding of this assessment was the availability of ICT in the countries of the region and the state-of-the-art applications achieved by some. The CETT will not be able to achieve timely and widespread impact unless it makes ample use of distance teaching methodologies through ICT application. Therefore, one important function of the CETT will be to promote the use of innovative training methods. To operate this functional area, the CETT can tap into the highly developed expertise and technological infrastructure of regional organizations, such as ILCE in Mexico. All of the ICT organizations mentioned expressed enthusiastic support for the CETT initiative.

4. Teacher Training in Reading Development

One common finding in all countries visited by the assessment team was the absence of specialized programs for the enhancement of reading in the classroom. Reading development is a minor component in the pre-service training curriculum and a rare occurrence in in-service teacher training programs. Clearly, the CETT will need to perform the function of promoting teacher training in reading. This represents a new development in all countries of the region since not many institutions in Central America can claim a developed expertise in reading.

Additional recommendations pertinent to design considerations include:

- Developing an action plan for learning to read based on each country's needs with representatives of collaborating institutions, beginning with short-term goals and activities, then moving to medium- and long-term plans.

- Conducting an inventory of the human and material resources available throughout the region in reading and building on what has already been identified.

- Coordinating with private and public donors, including international development agencies, and to the extent possible building linkages with ongoing bilateral USAID programs.

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47

- Closely involving the MINED in all eight countries in order to ensure their buy-in and future programmatic sustainability of CETT interventions.

- Strengthening community participation at the grassroots level to support CETT activities.

- Beginning social marketing to enhance interest in the culture of reading.

- Enlisting the participation of former CAPS, CLASP, Fulbright, and CASS participants, and patterning programs after teacher training (observed in the Dominican Republic and Panama) currently being implemented by the Peace Corps. In these countries, Peace Corps volunteers conduct personalized follow-up with teachers after in-service training programs have ended.

- Establishing legal and formal representation in each country through existing NGOs or regional-level entities, thus helping to ensure sustainability in spite of public-sector instabilities.

- Delivering training programs to countries by:

    1. Subcontracting with entities that can meet the needs of teachers in countries.

    2. Offering distance learning via television, videos, videoconferencing and the Internet to countries that have ICT connectivity and study packages to countries that do not.

- Advocating the establishment of a network of schools similar to *redes escolares* in Mexico, which receive technical assistance and monitoring from ILCE, Mexico, and UNED, Costa Rica.

- Advocating the use of curriculum standards as agreed to at the Central American Curriculum Summit, and helping to develop a form of validation for teachers trained with these standards.

- Establishing a Web site early on to allow countries to quickly learn about the CETT mission. The Web site will also hasten the exchange of information about best practices and lessons learned.

- Experimenting and taking risks. The Center should not be a burdensome bureaucracy beholden to politics or other exogenous pressures. The Center can and should be an autonomous arena of innovative ideas that can strengthen teachers' classroom capabilities.

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48

- Conducting candid research as a prelude to formulating new policies and advocating creative educational policies.

- Searching for ways to break the traditional bottlenecks in education, including rote learning, passive teachers and students, unreliable testing programs, community apathy and lack of materials.

VIII. LESSONS LEARNED

Week-long visits to eight countries in which four education specialists conducted interviews with dozens of education officials, and days of discussions analyzing the collected data have revealed a great deal of information about teacher-training needs, country capacities and institutional strengths and weaknesses.

Among the more salient lessons learned during this assessment that may have an impact on the structures and functions of the Centers of Excellence are:

There is a need to strengthen teacher abilities. In virtually all countries visited, teachers, administrators, ministry officials, parents, and leaders of national and international development agencies echoed the need for strengthening the quality of teachers. Of special importance were deficiencies in methodology and classroom management skills, especially among in-service teachers.

Interest was expressed in the concept of Centers of Excellence. Overarching and sincere interest in establishing Centers of Excellence was voiced in nearly every country and all interview scenarios. Some universities are literally clamoring to have the Center hosted by their institution. At no time did anyone express the belief that the Centers would be unnecessary or superfluous.

Prospects exist for long-term sustainability. The protracted sustainability of most development activities depends, in large part, on local interest manifested through economic support (either funding or in-kind resources). The demonstrated interest and involvement of many private-sector organizations and NGOs suggest that such contributions are likely, and will help guarantee continued Center of Excellence presence and programs to strengthen education quality in the region.

There are qualified host institutions for the Center of Excellence. The team was never really faced with the question about whether there were qualified institutions to host the Center of Excellence. The more perplexing question related to how to select the best institution from an impressive list of institutions throughout Central America. Six institutions were ultimately recommended for the follow-up assessment, although it was carefully noted that a plethora of qualified institutions and individuals is available in the region to serve as an informal network of technical assistance providers.

There is international commitment to education. USAID, the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, the United Nations, the Japan International Cooperation Agency, the European Economic Community and others are all actively involved in supporting education programs in this part of the world. Although funding levels related to particular natural disasters or political events may vary, the consensus is that the importance of education will continue to be recognized and programs supported.

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50

Technology offers many new educational opportunities. Whether in Mexico, Costa Rica, Panama or the Dominican Republic, impressive educational technology is being utilized by many universities and private foundations to bring to teachers and students alike an array of quality, previously unavailable, programs. Distance learning for both students and teachers is increasingly becoming the norm rather than the exception throughout the region.

Decentralization and community involvement strengthen educational programs. An especially important trend for the more impoverished and isolated rural schools is the emergence of a variety of programs that place trust, confidence and decision-making authority in the hands of local communities. This modality helps ensure careful stewardship of teaching materials, increased involvement of the teachers who are valued by parents and community leaders, and transparency in the way schools perform.

Reading levels/literacy scores remain low. Although considerable funds—both national and international—have been disbursed to improve curriculum, textbooks, materials and teacher skills, evaluations continue to reveal that too many children do not attain appropriate reading skills by the third grade. At the same time, creative teachers in the region are helping improve test scores. These teachers could serve as master trainers who can disseminate information about their techniques through the Centers of Excellence.

A culture of reading needs to be created. Children will generally learn to read more readily when they are motivated as to its importance in their daily lives. Such motivation is lacking, especially in the more impoverished rural areas where there is little, if anything, to read except perhaps discarded newspaper or an old magazine. Programs that make books available through classroom or community libraries or that conduct social marketing efforts both merit serious consideration.

Evaluating special needs could resolve reading problems. In the numerous schools visited and in meetings with university professors charged with preparing future teachers, it was apparent that little attention is paid to identifying or helping children with special needs, either cognitive, emotional or physical. Without addressing issues such as dyslexia, eye problems, attention deficit disorder, autism, etc., many children will continue to perform poorly—and no one will ever know why. Some selected NGOs work on special education issues, such as FUNPRES and Los Pipitos in El Salvador, but the impact is limited and resources committed to this important problem are lacking. Special education needs must be addressed with increased commitment by ministries of education, teacher training institutions, and NGOs.

Bilingual education programs need strengthening. In countries with large numbers of non-Spanish speaking indigenous children, there was little progress noted. Teachers are predominantly Spanish-only speakers, and children are expected to somehow plunge immediately into a school program in a virtually unknown language. Sensitivity to local language, values and traditions is needed.

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51

Educational reforms are ubiquitous, but have had limited impact. In nearly all countries visited, the words "reform" and "paradigm shift" are commonplace among educators. For the past decade, thanks in large part to contributions from international donor agencies, the region has experienced education reforms that have provided, for instance, curriculum, textbooks, testing programs, new materials, new vehicles, computers, warehouses and in-service teaching seminars. But, the difference at the classroom level has all too often amounted to very little according to information gathered by the research team.

Follow-up is needed to make training work. Teachers repeatedly indicated that they remember learning new methodologies. Nonetheless everyday realities in their classrooms often carried them back to more traditional methods that emphasize rote over reason as they resort to blackboard writing, student copying and measuring performance based solely on the information recalled in occasional tests. Training designed as a career development process proves to be more effective than isolated training. Follow-up at the classroom level was mentioned frequently as the ingredient most needed to help ensure that more creative, participatory and constructivist methodologies are utilized.

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52

IX.   NEXT STEPS

The objective of the follow-up assessment is to collect the data needed to design the Central American Center of Excellence for Teacher Training. The follow-up assessment in Central America will investigate the capacity of the institutions identified to form the Center. It will also answer any other country capacity questions left outstanding from this assessment. The following is a list of key questions for a follow-up assessment.

A.   Institutions

1.   Among issues to be investigated at each institution are:

- Potential areas in which the institution could serve the CETT

  - Programs offered, curricula for each program, duration of each, capacity per program, format, methodologies for training and teaching/learning style promoted
  - Accreditation of programs offered
  - Evaluation of programs (summary of findings of latest available report)

- Population and areas served annually

- Profile of student body: level of general education, urban/rural, gender

- Available physical and material resources to support residential and distance learning (facilities, technology infrastructure, libraries, laboratories, computers, etc.)

- Financial structure: sources of funds

- Personnel: numbers, categories, qualifications

- Dissemination of knowledge: publications (newsletters, research findings, radio, TV, audio or videocassettes, etc.)

- Commitment and interest of leaders and management to the vision, needs and changes that the Center of Excellence represents

- Accessibility of institutions to teachers and schools administrators within the target countries which the Center of Excellence is intended to serve

- Capacities to innovate, institutionalize and sustain pilot initiatives in teacher training

- Ability to generate and apply research towards improvement of teacher training principles, methods and systems

2. For each of the following four important areas—teaching reading in a multilingual or indigenous context; reaching people in remote areas; distance learning; and reducing the disconnect between theory and practice—assessments are needed:

- What is the institution's current capacity in this area? What is the quality of its program(s)? What is its vision?

- Which structure could best coordinate the institutions? What are the mechanisms needed for such a coordination? What will the process be to develop those mechanisms?

- Do the institutions have the capacity to work at a regional level? If not, what will be the cost of developing that capacity?

- How might the institutions work with each other, regional partners and key stakeholders to develop a CETT?

- How might entities not directly hosting the Center participate?

- What will be the strategy for engaging the private sector in the sustainability of the Center of Excellence?

- What will be the strategy for engaging the ministries of education in the Centers of Excellence?

- What is the interest level of the institutions in working together in the CETT?

B.   Country Capacity

1. Information Communication Technology and Distance Learning

- What might be the role of distance learning in the CETT? Which technologies will be appropriate? Who will it serve? What is already being done?

- Is it realistic to use ICT to provide distance education for teachers in remote areas? If it is, what capacity already exists? What additional capacity would need to be put in place? Would distance learning via computers be used to train teachers themselves or to train trainers of teachers?

- Which technologies can be used to deliver distance learning to teachers? Which technologies are available for teachers to enhance their classroom teaching with appropriate training?

- If computers will be used in the Center of Excellence, for what specifically will they be used: educating teachers, accessing the portal, interactive learning, distance learning?

- How many teachers will reasonably be able to access the Internet to use the portal or to be trained on-line?

2. Government and Institutions

- What is the vision, interest, and commitment of the ministry of education to the CETT?

- What is the general reaction/perception of the recommended design for the Center?

- What is the political will to support a Center like the one recommended?

- Which policies will need to be in place for a Center to function? What is the willingness and flexibility to support those policies?

- What in-country financial resources are available to help the sustainability of the CETT?

ANNEXES

1. Scope of Work

2. Work Plan

3. Research Instruments Used During Country Visits

4. List of Contacts

5. Country Profiles (with description of institutions)

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56

ANNEX 1: Scope of Work

**Centers of Excellence for Teacher Training: A Summit of the
Americas Initiative**

**Central American Assessment
Scope of Work**

BACKGROUND

Centers of Excellence for Teacher Training: A Summit of the Americas Initiative

At the Summit of the Americas in April 2001, President George W. Bush emphasized the importance of education for national progress and expressed the commitment of his administration to making education a centerpiece of the economic agenda of the United States. He further observed that educational indicators for Latin America and the Caribbean compare poorly with the rest of the world, with the lower socioeconomic groups being the hardest hit. While recognizing the complexities involved in determining the reasons for deficiencies and underachievement within education systems, he cited deterioration in teacher quality as a contributing factor. In addition, he noted that most teachers and school administrators in the hemisphere have limited materials, little support in the classroom and training ill suited for dealing with the needs of disadvantaged students.

To improve teacher quality in the Latin America and Caribbean region, President Bush announced the creation of three Centers of Excellence, to be housed in existing institutions in the Caribbean, Central America, and the Andean region of South America. These regional teacher training and resource centers are intended to improve the quality of early instruction in classrooms throughout each of the regions, with emphasis on poorer countries and teachers who work with disadvantaged communities in poor and rural areas. It is expected that about 15,000 teachers will benefit from this training over four years.

The focus of the initiative will be primarily on improving reading instruction in the early grades by assessing teacher-training needs and developing resources to address these needs. Needs may include: upgrading pedagogical skills of poorly qualified teachers; upgrading classroom management skills of teachers and administrators; enhancing available teaching materials; and applying information and communications technology to enhance instruction.

The Centers of Excellence will include:

- A training-of-trainers program so that teachers and school administrators can take the training back to their communities;

- A clearinghouse of teacher training materials; and

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Creative Associates International, Inc.

58

- An Internet portal linking teacher-training institutions, think tanks, schools, teachers, and universities so that they can share materials, "best practices" and "lessons learned" as well as provide virtual training.

USAID will administer the resources and coordinate the program for the Centers of Excellence, with the guidance of an Advisory Committee of U.S. and Latin American experts. In addition, the Department of Education, the Organization of American States, Ministries of Education, business and citizen groups, faith-based organizations, international donors, and other hemispheric governments will be enlisted to form a partnership with USAID for the implementation of the program.

The Basic Education and Policy Support Activity (Contract HNE –I-00-00 –00038-00) via the task order with LAC/SD-EHR (No.04) will be involved in laying the groundwork for the establishment of the Centers of Excellence. BEPS will be responsible for assessing regional teacher training needs and the potential capacity of institutions to serve as Centers of Excellence. In this regard, BEPS will produce three regional needs and capacity assessments – one each for the Caribbean, Central America, and Andean regions of South America.

A two-phase assessment will be undertaken in each of the three regions. Phase One will generate country profiles that identify teacher-training needs and institutions that have sufficient capacity to serve as Centers of Excellence. Based on an analysis of findings from Phase One, BEPS and USAID will identify three countries per region for a Second Phase institutional capacity assessment that will generate a more in-depth profile of one candidate institution in each of the three countries. Findings from the Second Phase will lead to the selection of one Center of Excellence institution in each of the three regions.

The assessment process will include, but not be limited to the following tasks:

a) Identify training needs within the region and countries for which Centers of Excellence could potentially be responsive;
b) Identify potential institutions within each of the three regions that have sufficient capacity to serve as Centers of Excellence, taking into account the criteria identified by the Advisory Committee (Annex A);
c) Create in-depth institutional profiles for three candidate institutions in each of the three regions; and
d) Identify possible sources of support in the US and sub-regional public and private sectors for the Centers of Excellence.

Central American Background

Central America has undertaken major education reforms in the past decades. In many communities, these efforts resulted in the decentralization of school management and in curriculums with a constructivist vision, among other successful outcomes. Yet despite a regional consensus on the key role of education in the development process, a lot more needs to be done.

Although the levels of public investment in education in the region are at the world average and have increased in recent years, educational systems have performed poorly. Latin America has the highest rates of repetition and dropouts in the world, especially among the poor and rural and indigenous people. On average, less than 60 percent of children who start primary school complete six years of school. Among rural, indigenous people – who make up 23 percent of the regional population – illiteracy rates are high. Although the reasons for this poor performance are complex, one of the major factors is that teachers are poorly trained, especially in teaching language arts, and many students fail to learn to read and/or become discouraged and dropout of school.

The regional perception is that teacher quality has deteriorated over the past decade and the teaching profession has lost its historical prestige. Political, social and economic crises of the past decades have led teachers to shift into other professions or emigrate to other countries. The simultaneous expansion of school enrollment created an urgent demand for teachers, resulting in an increase of self-trained teachers that adds up to 30 percent of the current teacher workforce. Salary levels have been declining, and absenteeism is rampant in most countries. There are no incentives for well-performing teachers, who receive the same salary regardless of the quality of their work. In pre-service teacher training, many instructors still emphasize old methods, such as dictating from texts. In-service training is seldom related to the needs of schools and offers few incentives to implement what has been learned. In remote rural areas, there often is no training available.

Within this context, the Central American Center of Excellence initiative will focus on increasing teacher quality in Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Panama. For language reasons, the Dominican Republic also will be included among the beneficiaries of the Central American Center while Belize will be served by the Caribbean Center of Excellence. Disadvantaged Mexican teachers may also be beneficiaries of the Central American Center of Excellence, and the assessment will consider Mexican training institutions as potential sites for the Center.

METHODOLOGY

Overview

The aims of the Central American Assessment are to: (1) assess the state of teacher training and country capacities, especially in regard to reading instruction, in each of the eight countries listed above; and (2) assess institutional capacities and select three countries and potential host institutions for the Central American Center of Excellence. Desktop research and two phases of fieldwork will be conducted to make these assessments. During the Phase One fieldwork, a preliminary assessment of the eight countries will be conducted and three countries will be identified as prospective hosts of the sponsoring institution. During Phase Two, an in-depth assessment of potential institutions in these three countries will narrow the possibilities and highlight the recommended location of the Center of Excellence for the Central American region.

Desktop Research

In order to provide the country context to inform the fieldwork in each country, desktop research will be conducted prior to the fieldwork by the consultants hired to complete the fieldwork. Members of the BEPS Activity will assist the consultants before their departure and amplify information while the teams are in the field.

The research will include but not be limited to:

1) Socioeconomic data by country to include GDP per capita, school-age population, unemployment.
2) Education indicators of the formal school system, by country.
3) Agencies involved in teacher training by country (to include multilateral, government, nongovernmental, trade unions, private sector), types of programs offered and planned.
4) Teacher training institutions by country, student capacity, programs offered and planned, sponsorship of programs.
5) Review and analysis of available literature pertaining to teacher training needs in Central America, the policies and plans for professional development, and constraints to implementation.
6) Available data on reading and literacy levels of primary school children.

Fieldwork

The field research has two phases, the State of Teacher Training, Reading Instruction, and Country Capacity Fieldwork and the Institutional Assessment Fieldwork. Separate teams will conduct the two phases of fieldwork in the Central American Region, and a Team Leader will coordinate the work of the two teams.

Fieldwork Phase One: Assessment of the State of Teacher Training, Reading Instruction and Country Capacity

The purpose of the phase one fieldwork is to assess the state of teacher training and reading instruction, to evaluate country capacity, and to perform a preliminary assessment of institutional capacity regarding teacher training. A team of five individuals, the Phase One Assessment Team, will perform investigative fieldwork on these topics. The team will be divided into two sub-teams coordinated by the Team Leader to conduct fieldwork in the eight countries. Upon returning to headquarters, the team members will present their findings on country context, teacher training and the preliminary assessment of institutional capacity to the BEPS management team and USAID.

The fieldwork will include but not be limited to:

1) Prepare instruments necessary to conduct the assessment, including questionnaires, and interview schedules.

2) Conduct field visits to the following countries: Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, and Panama.

3) Conduct interviews, focus groups and meetings with a sampling of key relevant personnel in the public and private sectors and donor community, including but not limited to USAID mission staff, State Department Public Diplomacy Officers, Ministries of Education, and school administrators and teachers.

4) Assess teacher training needs, especially as relevant to reading instruction, in each of the countries:
   - Teacher perception of training.
   - Teacher access to training.
   - School Administrator perception of teacher training.
   - Specific needs of teachers in more remote and disadvantaged communities.
   - Specific need of teachers in multilingual countries and communities.
   - Summary of key educational issues – quality of teaching and learning, management of classroom resources, equity, access to secondary education, finance.
   - Key teacher-related issues with respect to status, role in the community, recruitment, retention, teacher training, (pre-service and in-service) support services, incentives (especially for teaching in rural areas), evaluation.
   - Agencies involved in teacher training by country (to include multilateral, government, non governmental, trade unions, private sector), types of programs offered.
   - School-based teacher training, including a description of practices.
   - The national vision for teacher development and training, including policies, planning, career path frameworks, etc.
   - Overview of teacher training reforms within past decade.
   - Summary of teacher training needs.
   - Teacher training institutions by country, student capacity, programs offered, sponsorship of programs.
   - Innovative teaching practices at the primary level, particularly with respect to reading.

5) Assess the country capacity in each of the countries:
   Socioeconomic data by country, including GDP per capita, school age population, unemployment levels, etc.
   Formal school system description by country: current and projected number of children enrolled at primary and secondary levels, number of trained and untrained teachers, number of years in service, level of teachers' formal academic education.
   Delineation of the roles of the Ministry of Education, school administrators and inspectors, teachers' unions, external agencies to the University, and other

institutions in terms of teacher training (including access mechanisms, funding, approaches, etc.).

Exploratory research related to the possibility of gaining long-term financial support for the project from the public and private sectors.

Investigation of the possibilities for forming Center of Excellence partnerships with public and private institutions.

Assessment of political will of host country leaders to support critical teaching reforms.

6) Conduct a preliminary assessment of teacher training institutional capacity within the country, including identifying institutions, appropriate contacts, and information on institutional capacity, including ICT capacity.

Assessment of ICT capacity during the Phase One visits to the various institutions shall to the maximum extent feasible ascertain answers to the nine questions listed below, with particular emphasis on questions one, two, three and six. Information that is not gathered during Phase One will be collected during Phase Two.

1.   Are institutions and/or individual teachers employing distance learning techniques?
      If so, what are they? (Computers, TV, radio, etc.)

2.   Are they using technology to mediate the instruction process?
      If so, which technology? (Computers, TV, etc.)

3.   If they are using technology either for distance education in the training of teachers, or to mediate training in the classroom, what is the content of the materials?
      Where was it produced, what does it teach, what language is it in, etc.?
      Is there any content on the teaching of reading?

4.   In what form is the content available? (Disks, cassettes, CD Rom's, etc.)

5.   How often do they use this technology, and to what extent do they rely on it?

6.   What is their experience using technology?
   • Are they sufficiently trained in using the technology?
   • Are materials available?
   • Is tech support available?
   • Is the equipment reliable?
   • Is there a problem with security?

7.   Hardware/Software/Connectivity Overview:
   • If they use computers, how many computers do they have?
   • What are they? (Brand, how much RAM, which processor, capacity of the hard drive, fax/modem, etc.)

- What software are they using?
- Are the computers networked?
- Do they have Internet access? Are they using a phone line with a local ISP? Do they have cable connection?
- Is Internet connectivity reliable?
- How costly is Internet connectivity?
- Is there an existing web portal that has been established and is used throughout the region for teacher training?

8. If they are not using ICT, or if they are using a form of ICT for training, is there room for improvement? Could they see useful applications where it now does not exist?

9. What levels of technology would be most effective and appropriate for each of the countries under review?
   - Would remote access or any other IT application be useful for teachers who complete the program, for the purposes of training in their country?

Phase Two: Institutional Capacity Fieldwork

After the findings of the Phase One Assessment Team have been presented to BEPS management team and USAID, three countries will be selected for further in-depth analysis of potential institutions. A second team of consultants will complete this analysis. The Phase Two Institutional Capacity Team will be responsible for developing a profile of one institution in each of the three countries and will report to the Team Leader from Phase One. Among the areas to be investigated at each institution are:

Commitment and interest of leaders and management of candidate institutions to innovation, change and the specific vision, needs and changes which the Centers of Excellence represent (political will). Examples of leadership's past commitment to change will be particularly helpful.

Population and areas served annually.

Teacher training programs offered, curricula for each program, duration of each program, capacity per program, format, methodologies for training and teaching/learning style promoted.

Accreditation of programs offered.

Evaluation of teacher education programs (summary of findings of latest available report).

Profile of student body: level of general education, urban/rural, gender, etc.

Available physical and material resources to support residential and distance learning (facilities, libraries, laboratories, ICT infrastructure including computers etc.).

Dissemination of knowledge: publications, newsletters, research findings, radio, TV, audio or videocassettes, etc.

Financial structure and sources of funding.

Personnel, including numbers, categories, qualifications.

Accessibility of institutions to teachers and schools administrators within the target countries which the Center of Excellence is intended to serve.

Capacities to innovate, institutionalize and sustain pilot initiatives in teacher training.

Ability to generate and apply research towards improvement of teacher training principles, methods and systems.

Deliverables

The Central American Team as a whole will be responsible for producing the following deliverables:

➢ A final report to be delivered to Creative Associates, USAID and the Advisory Committee, summarizing:

The teacher training needs, and status of existing teacher training with special attention to reading instruction;

The countries' capacity, resources and sources of public and private support for the Center; and

The institutional profile of 3 institutions that could potentially host the Centers of Excellence.

The report shall include: an executive summary; country and institutional profiles in a consistent format; and list of meetings, organizations and persons contacted. The final report shall be submitted in soft and electronic copies (in Microsoft Word). It shall be as succinct as possible and not to exceed 50 pages

➢ A summary presentation of the work already completed, delivered by the Team Leader to the Advisory Committee in November, 2001.

In order to accomplish these tasks,

a. The Phase One Assessment Team will,

➢ Prepare a first draft to be delivered to the Team Leader two weeks following completion of field visits. Team Leader will review for quality control and submit for review by USAID and the Advisory Committee three weeks following completion of field visits. The first draft will not include point 3 of the final report (see above).

➢ Hold a debriefing meeting with USAID and Creative Associates.

➢ Team Leader will prepare and submit for review by USAID a detailed Work Plan for Phase Two. USAID will provide comments on Work Plan within mutually agreed time.

b. The Phase Two Institutional Capacity Team will,

➢ Prepare a first draft to be delivered to the Team Leader two weeks following completion of field visits. Team Leader will review for quality control and submit for review to USAID and the Advisory Committee three weeks following completion of field visits. The first draft will be exclusively on point 3 of the final report (see above).

c. The Team Leader will,

➢ Prepare a draft of the final report to be delivered five days after receiving feedback from Creative Associates International, Inc., the Advisory Committee and USAID. This draft will include the revised findings from both first drafts, along with recommendations.

➢ Deliver the final report five days after receiving feedback on the draft final report from Creative Associates International, Inc., USAID and the Advisory Committee.

PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE

The Phase One Assessment Team will:
- Meet at the offices of Creative Associates Intl. to work on development of instruments, research and logistics from 9/24 to 9/28;
- Do the fieldwork between 10/1 and 10/26;
- Return to Washington, DC on 10/29 to work on deliverables until 11/2; and
- Deliver a first draft report on 11/16.

The Phase Two Institutional Capacity Team will:
- Meet at the offices of Creative Associates Intl. to work on development of instruments, research and logistics from 10/24 to 10/26;
- Meet with the Phase One Assessment Team on 10/29-30 to get input on which institutions/countries should be visited and other issues relevant for analysis;
- Do the fieldwork conducting an in-depth institutional assessment of the potential Centers of Excellence, between 10/31 and 11/21;
- Return to Washington, DC on 11/22 to work on deliverables until 11/29; and
- Deliver a first draft report on 12/13.

The Team Leader will:
- Coordinate activities of both phases;
- Deliver a second draft 5 days after feedback from Creative Associates Intl., USAID and the Advisory Committee;
- Deliver the final report 5 days after feedback from Creative Associates Intl. and USAID; and
- Deliver a summary presentation for the Advisory Committee on or about 12/15.

PERSONNEL

Phase One: Team for Assessment of the State of Teacher Training, Reading Instruction and Country Capacity

The team will be comprised of three Education Generalists and two Teacher Training Specialists. The team will be divided into groups that will conduct fieldwork in eight countries.

The **Team Leader**/ Education Generalist will:
- Prepare, in collaboration with the teams, a strategy for conducting the assessments and the necessary instruments for the assessment;
- Oversee the conducting of the assessment in the specified countries in accordance with agreed strategy;
- Manage communications with collaborating institutions in the U.S., participating countries and the Advisory Committee;
- Be responsible for the production of the first drafts in conjunction with the team members and deliver them to Creative Associates International, Inc.;
- Be responsible for the completion and delivery of the second draft and the final version of the report; and
- Deliver a summary presentation of the work to the Advisory Committee.

The two **Education Generalists** will:
- Participate in the preparation of a strategy for conducting the assessments, and the necessary instruments for the assessment;
- Conduct the assessment, in collaboration with the teacher training specialist, in the two assigned countries in accordance with agreed strategy;
- Manage communications with the Team Leader; and
- Report back on the findings of the in-country assessments to the other members of the team and the Center of Excellence BEPS management team.
- Assist in the production of a first draft in conjunction with the other team members and deliver to Creative Associates International, Inc.

The two **Teacher Training Specialists** will:
- Assist in the preparation of a strategy for conducting the assessments, and the necessary instruments for the assessment;
- Conduct research on the context and status of teacher training education in the countries assigned to each Teacher Training Specialist;
- Identify available resources in the areas of reading instruction with specific reference to non-Spanish speaking children; and
- Assist in the preparation first draft in conjunction with the Team Leader and deliver to Creative Associates International, Inc.

Basic Education and Policy Support (BEPS) Activity
Creative Associates International, Inc.

67

Phase Two: Institutional Capacity Component

This phase will be undertaken by an Education Generalist – and if need be other experts – who will conduct fieldwork in three different countries, looking at one institution in each country.

- Prepare a strategy for conducting the assessments, and the necessary instruments for the assessment, to be reviewed with USAID;
- Conduct the assessment in the institutions at the three assigned countries in accordance with agreed strategy;
- Manage communications with the Team Leader;
- Report back on the findings of the institutional assessment to the Team Leader and the Center of Excellence BEPS management team; and
- Produce a first draft to be delivered to Creative Associates International, Inc.

Basic Education and Policy Support (BEPS) Activity
Creative Associates International, Inc.

68

ANNEX 2: Work Plan

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69

WORK PLAN

1. PRINCIPAL OBJECTIVES

Carry out the Phase One Assessment objectives of the Scope of Work (dated September 27, 2001), including:

- Assess the state of teacher training and country capacities, especially as related to reading instruction;

- Identify and document pre-service and in-service training needs of teachers in disadvantaged communities, focusing on the skills required for teaching reading at the basic education level;

- Identify the needs of the system that supports teacher training of reading, including aspects such as class and school management, school administration, teaching material, information and communications technology, etc.;

- Identify potential institutions in Central America that have sufficient capacity to serve as Centers of Excellence, and perform an initial assessment; and

- Identify and document possible sources of support in the public and private sectors for the Centers of Excellence.

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

As described in the Scope of Work, two separate teams (Team 1 & 2) of two persons each will conduct the salient fieldwork in the Central American Region.

2.1 Countries To Be Visited

Team 1: Nicaragua, Honduras, El Salvador and Guatemala.

Team 2: Dominican Republic, Panama, Costa Rica, and Mexico.

2.2 Key Research Questions

The following primary questions will guide the assessment:

- To what extent are teacher training issues specifically regarded as contributors to underachievement in Central America?
- To what extent is reading instruction perceived as being a critical problem in Central American education systems, and by which group(s) of stakeholders? What specific aspects of reading instruction are deemed problematic?

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Creative Associates International, Inc.

70

- What are the major teacher training needs in disadvantaged/poorer communities? How do these differ from other communities?
- To what extent are current teacher training institutions addressing the teacher training needs of disadvantaged communities? What are the major gaps in services to teachers? How might these be addressed?
- To what extent are distance learning techniques and/or ICT presently used for teacher training and/or for primary education? What improvements could be made for more effective use (including other technologies)? (See also questions detailed in Scope of Work.)
- Which Central American teacher training institutions potentially have sufficient capacity to support a Regional Center of Excellence for Teacher Training, including training-of-trainers? What are strengths and limitations of each?
- To what extent is the private sector willing to support teacher training though the vehicle of a Regional Center of Excellence for Teacher Training?

2.3 Data Sources

The following will serve as primary data sources for the Centers of Excellence for Teacher Training: Central American Assessment.

- Parents
- Teachers and Teachers' Unions
- School Administrators
- Ministries of Education
- Teacher Training Institutions
- NGOs
- Donors such as World Bank, IDB, etc.
- USAID

2.4 Key Data Collection Techniques

- Interviews
- Focus groups
- Informal meetings with a selected sampling of key personnel in the public and private sectors. These include, but are not limited to, USAID and US Embassy personnel, Ministry of Education functionaries, school principals, regional school supervisors, teachers, and teachers' unions.
- Visits to approximately two schools located in more impoverished rural areas. On-site interviews will be held with teachers and directors. Classroom management styles employed in the teaching of reading will be observed. The presence of school libraries, textbooks, teacher manuals, and attendant computer equipment will also be a focus of discussions and observations.

Basic Education and Policy Support (BEPS) Activity
Creative Associates International, Inc.

71

3.   DELIVERABLES

The Phase One Assessment team of consultants will produce the following:

1.   A draft report that summarizes:
   a. The teacher training needs of the region;
   b. The status of existing teacher training with special attention to reading instruction;
   c. Each country's capacity, resources, and sources of public and private support for a teacher training/training-of-trainers center; and
   d. A preliminary assessment of institutional capacity regarding teacher training.
   (The report will include country and institutional profiles in a consistent format and a list of meetings and organizations and people contacted.)

2.   Presentation of findings to Creative Associates, USAID, and the Phase II team.

4.   SUPERVISION

- The Team Leader will be responsible for design, implementation and production of the report. He will assume overall supervision of the sub-task order design, implementation, data analysis, presentation, and report writing.

- As BEPS/LAC Activity Coordinator, Ms. Antonieta Harwood is directly responsible for overall quality and performance of the Central American assessment team, liaison needs between USAID and the Team, and quality assurance of the final report.

- Dr. Don Graybill, BEPS Project Director, will provide general oversight, support and quality monitoring of the sub-task order.

- David Evans is the designated LAC/HER CTO for this sub-task.

5.   SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES

Activities	Dates
• Bibliographic survey	17-21 September 2001
• Prepare work plan • Prepare instruments • Arrange for interviews • Field visit to Guatemala/Panama • Field visit to El Salvador/Costa Rica • Field visit to Honduras/Dominican Republic • Field Visit to Nicaragua/Mexico	24-26 September 24-28 September 17-28 September 1-5 October 8-12 October 15-19 October 22-26 October
• Group Analysis of the data	29 October-2 Nov.
• Prepare draft report	5-16 November
• Present draft report	17 November, 2001

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Creative Associates International, Inc.

72

ANNEX 3: Research Instruments Used During Country Visits

- **QUESTIONNAIRE FOR MINISTRY OF EDUCATION**
  (Minister, Vice-Minister or General Director)

- **QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHER TRAINING INSTITUTIONS**
  (University Department Directors and NGOs)

- **QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHER UNIONS**

- **QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS**

- **QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE PRIVATE SECTOR**

- **QUESTIONNAIRE FOR USAID MISSIONS**

- **QUESTIONNAIRE FOR ADMINISTRATORS**
  (Principals and Supervisors)

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73

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
(Minister, Vice-Minister or General Director)

1. What is your perception regarding children's problems associated with reading?
    - In rural areas
    - In urban, marginalized areas

2. What do you think should be the strategy to strengthen teachers in their capacity to teach reading?

3. Which elements of the education system ought to be reinforced to strengthen reading instruction?

4. What programs does the Ministry have in place to strengthen reading in schools?

5. What initiatives are being developed regarding pre-service and in-service teacher training?

6. What initiatives are being developed for supporting reading (libraries, free books, etc.)?

7. What kind of technological and multimedia capacities does the Ministry have which could support distance learning programs? What are the plans of the Ministry in those areas?

8. Tell us about the supply and demand for teachers: how many teachers are there, how many new teachers per year, how many leave the system?

9. What level of training do teachers have: none, normal schools, universities?

10. What are the existing options for in-service and pre-service training from the Ministry and other institutions?

11. Is there any specific training for reading instruction?

12. What are the main institutions of teacher training that depend on the Ministry?

13. What institutions has the Ministry contracted for training purposes and how successful has the experience been?

14. What are the special agents within the Ministry in charge of pre-service and in-service teacher training?

15. Is there any kind of NGO and private sector participation in teacher training?

16. Which are the teacher training programs supported by international donors? Are any of these programs specific for reading instruction?

17. What kind of support does the Ministry provide to teachers attending training programs?
   - What kinds of stimuli?
   - Are travel expenses paid?

18. How does the Ministry approach specific training needs of rural, marginalized and isolated areas?

19. How are equity issues approached (gender, socioeconomic)

20. What percentage of the rural population has access to secondary education?

21. Are there incentives offered to teachers working in rural areas?

22. How do you evaluate teachers' performance?

23. What kinds of reforms have been put in place for in-service training?
   - How effective have the reforms been?
   - Which population received reformed training?

24. How could reading instruction training be improved?

25. What is the country's technological capacity?

26. Are there distance learning programs available?

27. Do you use distance learning techniques? If yes, how do you deliver them?

28. Does the education system use technology? If yes, what type?

29. What are the contents of the programs?

30. Do you use computers, TV, radio?

31. How often do you use technology and how much do you depend on it?
   - Where does it come from, what does it teach, in what language was it written?
   - Does it have any teaching content?

32. Do technicians and educators get training to be able to use technology?
   - Do they have training materials?
   - Is technical assistance available?
   - Is the equipment reliable?
   - Do you have security problems to protect the equipment?

33. How many computers do you have available?
- Which brand?
- Do you have teaching software to train teachers in reading instruction?
- Do you have a Web site?
- Do you have Internet access?
- How reliable is that Internet connection?
- Is the Internet costly?
- Is there a Web page for teacher training?

(If they are not using Information Communications Technology [ICT], or if they are using ICT for training)

34. How do you think the use of technology could be improved?
- What would be its main purpose/priority?

35. What level of technology would be the most appropriate and effective for the country (e.g., access to teachers in remote areas, provide training at a national level, etc.)?

Basic Education and Policy Support (BEPS) Activity
Creative Associates International, Inc.

76

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHER TRAINING INSTITUTIONS
(University Department Directors and NGOs)

1. What teacher training programs do you have at the university?
   - How many students register and graduate per year in the area of elementary education?
   - Of those who graduate, how long does it take them and what kind of degree do they receive?

2. How do you implement teacher training programs?
   - Through which organisms?
   - Using what methodology?
   - Please describe the continuing services.
   - Where is the balance between pedagogical theory and practice?

3. Does the institution have reading specialists and specific reading instruction courses?
   - What background do the specialists have?
   - What is the content of the courses (syllabus)?

4. What is the geographical territory covered by the university?

5. Describe the strengths and weaknesses of your reading program.

In-Service Training

6. What kinds of in-service training do you provide?
   - Do you follow up on these activities?
   - Do you evaluate these activities?

Institutional Capacity

7. What is the nature of your technological capacity?

8. What are your sources of funding?
   - Do you receive support from the private sector?
   - From international donors?

9. Are you a specialized institution? How many departments do you have?

10. What is the curriculum of the primary education program?

11. What's the percentage of full-time professors in this institution?

12. Do you have cooperative agreements or partnerships with other institutions, public or private?

13. Do you have any experience in distance education?

14. What do you think about the Centers of Excellence concept and would your institution be interested in participating in it?

15. Please describe weaknesses and strengths of the teacher training programs in your institution.

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78

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS' UNIONS

1. What percentage of the teachers is unionized?

2. Which are the best institutions for pre-service and in-service training for teachers in your opinion?

3. Which are in your view the strengths and weaknesses in reading instruction?

4. What is your policy towards in-service training?

5. How would you react to a center for in-service teacher training?

6. How could the union support the centers? How could unions contribute?

7. What view does the union have on in-service and pre-service training institutions?

Basic Education and Policy Support (BEPS) Activity
Creative Associates International, Inc.

79

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS

1. What are the main teaching methods in which you have received training?

2. What teacher training institution did you attend? Based on your experience, what were its strengths and weaknesses in reading instruction training? Which institution do you consider the best in your country regarding this matter?

3. How many times a month/year do you receive training?

4. What courses in reading instruction did you receive?
    - When was the last one?
    - What kind of incentive did you receive?
    - What methodologies were used to teach you how to teach reading?

5. Which are your priorities to strengthen your own capacity for teaching reading?

6. Which you think are the priorities for strengthening children's ability to read?

7. Do you use reading programs for children with English as a second language?

8. What programs exist for children with learning disabilities, attention deficit disorder, etc.?

9. Do you have enough programs available for teaching reading?

10. Please describe how you teach reading:
    - What methods do you use?
    - What are your goals?
    - What materials do you use?
    - What resources do you have handy?
    - What obstacles you encounter?
    - Overall, how has your experience been in teaching reading?

11. Do you regularly evaluate your students' progress? Please describe how you conduct those evaluations.

12. What materials do you use to teach reading from K-3?

13. Which strategies do you use for engaging parents and the community in supporting reading instruction?

14. What kind of support is provided to you for participating in in-service training?
    - What incentive do you receive?
    - Do you get a per diem?

Basic Education and Policy Support (BEPS) Activity
Creative Associates International, Inc.

80

15. How do you plan your classes (time for reading, math, etc.)?

16. What percentage of the time is invested in reading?

17. What percentage in reading instruction?

18. What training you think principals and supervisors should have to help you improve your teaching of reading?

19. How would you like to use computers?

20. Did you receive training in computers?
      - Has it been enough for you?
      - What kinds of materials did they give you?
      - What kind of training would you find useful?

21. What kind of technology do you have access to and how often do you use it?

22. Do you have access to the Internet through your municipality?

23. Do you have access to TV, radio, etc?

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE PRIVATE SECTOR

1. Please give us your impression of the country's education quality.

2. What is the private sector's participation in education?

3. What would motivate a company to participate in strengthening education?

4. What is your opinion of the Centers of Excellence's concept?

5. How could the private sector participate in the project?

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR USAID MISSIONS

1. Purpose and objective of the fieldwork:
    *   Initial institutional analysis of potential hosts for the Centers of Excellence.
    *   Assessment of needs, supply and demand of training for teachers
    *   Discussions with key school actors (administrators, principal, teachers, students)

2. Which are the educational institutions funded by USAID? How are their programs performing?

3. What is USAID's perception of the Ministry of Education?

4. Which are the stronger NGOs focused on education and particularly in training teachers to teach reading?

5. Does the Mission know of any initiatives of the private sector in supporting education (i.e., foundations, American companies that might be interested in supporting such a project, etc.)

6. Who are the main donors in education? Where are they, what are they doing, how much are they investing?

7. What is the Mission's perspective on the Centers of Excellence? How could the country participate in the initiative, which country needs could the Center address?

8. What is the country's technological capacity, especially in terms of distance education?

Basic Education and Policy Support (BEPS) Activity
Creative Associates International, Inc.

83

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR ADMINISTRATORS
(PRINCIPALS AND SUPERVISORS)

1. What is the average number of new teachers arriving at your school each year?

2. What are your priorities to improve the teachers' ability to teach reading?

3. How many yearly training sessions do you hold?

4. What is your perception of the students' reading achievement in the early grades?

5. In general, would you say that teachers do a good job in teaching children reading?

6. Do you have specific programs to train primary teachers to teach reading?

7. What are they?

8. Do you have a specialist to train teachers in reading instruction?

9. Is so, how do you deliver this training?

10. Is there a dialogue between teachers and school administrators on pedagogical needs?

11. What are your training programs?

12. Do administrators listen to those needs and provide the appropriate training?

13. How do you involve parents and the community to support the children's learning process and, in particular, reading?

14. Are there venues in the school system to support the community in this effort?

15. What are the priorities in improving the children's ability to read?

16. Are there any remedial programs for learning disabilities, attention deficit disorder, dyslexia, etc.?

17. How often during the year is reading ability measured?

18. At what grades?

19. How is it measured?

Basic Education and Policy Support (BEPS) Activity
Creative Associates International, Inc.

84

20.   What would your priorities be to improve the teachers' ability to teach reading?

21.   What percentage of time is dedicated to reading?

22.   What incentives are in place for teachers to improve their ability to teach reading?

23.   What advantages are provided for teachers to attend training programs?

24.   How do you encourage them?

25.   Are travel expenses/per diem paid for?

26.   Is there any research done regarding the need of training to improve teachers' ability to teach reading?

27.   Who did it?

28.   When was it done?

29.   What kind of training would principals/supervisors need to support teachers in strengthening their ability to teach reading?

ANNEX 4: List of Contacts

Basic Education and Policy Support (BEPS) Activity
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86

Costa Rica

Ministry of Education of Costa Rica
Guillermo Vargas Salazar
Minister

University of Costa Rica
Dra. Sandra García Pérez
Dean, Department of Education

Zoila Rosa Vargas Cordero
Director, Department of Education
School of Special Education

State Distance Education University
Eugenia Chavez
Director, School of Education

State Distance Education University
Vigny Alvarado Castillo
Chief, Systems Department

National University of Costa Rica
María Ester Aguilar Mora
Vice Dean, Center for Educational Research and Teacher Training
Campus Omar Dengo

Fundación Omar Dengo
Clotilde Fonseca
Executive Director

Elena Carreras
External Relations

El Palmar Elementary School
Ivania Hernández, 2nd Grade teacher

Donelia Núñez, teacher

American/Costa Rican Chamber of Commerce
Sylvia Homberger
Executive Director, Junior Achievement

Sandra Fraga
Executive Assistant, External Relations

Basic Education and Policy Support (BEPS) Activity
Creative Associates International, Inc.

87

CRUSA
Miguel Fuentes Duran
Project Assistant

Estado de la Nación
Jorge Vargas Cullell
Consultant

Fundación UNA (Microsoft)
Daniel Rueda
Manager for Development

Latin American Center for Cooperation and Sustainable Development
Lawrence Pratt
Associate Director

IDB
René Cajina
Financial Administration Director

UNESCO
Juan Chong,
Central America Regional Director

Peace Corps
Ing. Juan Coward, Msc
Program Director

U.S. Embassy
Peter Brennan
Public Diplomacy Officer

Ana Lucía Pérez
Senior Cultural Affairs Officer

Basic Education and Policy Support (BEPS) Activity
Creative Associates International, Inc.

88

Dominican Republic

Ministry of Education of the Dominican Republic (Secretariat of Education [SEE])
Angel Hernández
Vice-Minister for Teachers' Affairs

Ancell Scheker Mendoza
National Director of Basic Education

Bélgica Ramírez
Director, Department of In-Service Training and Continuing Education

Miguel Ciprián
Director, SEE-INAFOCAM

PUCMM/Santiago de los Caballeros
Dulce Rodríguez
Academic Vice Rector

PUCMM
Francisco Polanco
Director, Academic Affairs

INTEC
Altagracia López
Academic Vice Rector

Sandra González
Director, Education Department

Círculo Infantil School
Mechy Hernández Caamaño
Director

The Americas Institute of Technology
Sergio Grullón Mejía
Director

Santo Domingo Autonomous University (UASD)
José Francisco Disla
Director, Department of Pedagogy

Normal School of Santo Domingo
Mario Vega, Deputy Director

Basic Education and Policy Support (BEPS) Activity
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89

Republic of Guatemala Elementary School
Eduardo Hidalgo
Director

Silverina Mejía
Deputy Director

FLACSO (Latin American Social Sciences Faculty)
Rubén Sillé
Director

Cheila Valera
Research Specialist

Poveda Cultural Center
Digna Garcia, Education Officer

Josefina Espaillat, Education Officer

Dominican Teachers' Association (ADP)
Nelly Amador

EDUCA
Aida Consuelo Hernández Bonnelly
Executive Director

IDB
Dr. Richard Pelczar
Senior Specialist for Social Development

Louis I. Rodriguez, Educational Technology Advisor
Seconded to SEE (Ministry of Education of Dominican Republic)

Peace Corps
Anita Friedman
Country Director

Domingo Valerio
Education Coordinator

USAID/Santo Domingo
Neici M. Zeller
Education Specialist
General Development Office

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90

El Salvador

Ministry of Education of El Salvador
Evelyn Jacir de Lovo
Minister

Rolando Marín
Vice Minister

Patricia Mejía Lagos
Director, International Cooperation

Michele de Nuila
Director, Staff Development

Matilde de Quintana
Staff Development Specialist

Rafael Ramos
Director, Professional Teacher Training

Adalberto Campos
Director, Higher Education

Rebeca Ramos
Coordinator, Early Childhood Education

Marta Gladys de Palacios
Director, Mobile Libraries

Central American University
Agustín Fernández
Director, Faculty of Education

University of El Salvador
Ing. José Francisco Marroquin
Academic Vice-Rector

Don Bosco University
José Humberto Bosco
Dean of Science and Education

Fabian Bruno
Director of the School of Education

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91

Modular Open University
Lic. Margarita González
Dean, Science and Humanities

University Francisco Gavidia
Ing. Mario Antonio Ruiz
Rector

Canton El Potín School Center and Institute
Carlos Alberto Gutiérrez Alvarez
Principal

Farida Fuleima Flores
Assistant Principal

Jaime Pineda
Regional Pedagogical Advisor

FEPADE (Business Foundation for Educational Development)
Manuel Arrieta
President

Edgardo Suarez
Executive Director

Ricardo Freund
Vice President

Joaquin Samayoa
Director

FUNPRES (Foundation for Special Education)
Marina Choto de Romero
Executive Director

Regina Gallardo de Pineda
Public Relations Director

Group ALFA
Juan Valiente
Executive Director

Organization of Iberian-American States for Education, Science and Culture (OEI)
Abigail Castro de Pérez,
Regional Director, Central America

USAID/San Salvador
Mark Silverman
Mission Director

Dorita Gutierrez
SO Education Team Leader

Julio Segovia
Strategic Development Office, Economics/Education

Yamilet de Pleitez
Trainer

Mercy Casillo, Carmen Enríquez
Team Members

Guatemala

Ministry of Education of Guatemala
Lic. Bayardo Mejía Monzón
Vice Minister of Education

Lic. Rossana de Hegel
Coordinator National and International Cooperation Unit

Lic. Claudia Ivanova
Consultant, National Cooperation

Lic. Enrique Cortéz
Coordinator, Continuing Education

Lic. Silvia de Arriaza
Coordinator, Pre-Service Teacher Training

Vocational Center, Mayacam Normal School
Rafael Coyote Rum
Founder/Director

Francisca Mucia Aju
Librarian/Promoter

Juan de León Normal School
Amilcar Gutiérrez
Director

Pedro Molina Normal School
Agustín Ordóñez Sitan
Director

Agustín Ordoñez Sitan
Deputy Director

Julieta Castañeda de Obregón
Professor

Axel Haroldo Montufar
Professor

Axel R. Mendoza Irungaray
Professor

Santa Lucia School at Utatlán
Abraham Gómez
Director

University San Carlos
Francisco Rosales Cerezo
Director

Universidad del Valle, Guatemala
Lic. Roberto Moreno Godoy
Rector

Dra. Yetilie de Baessa
Director, Center for Educational Research

Jaqueline García de León
Director, Department of Education

Ricardo Antillon
Director, External Programs Development

American School of Guatemala
Barbara Baker Barillas
Principal

University Rafael Landivar
Dr. Bienvenido Argueta
Director, Education Department

USAID/Guatemala City
Julia Richards
SO Education Team Leader

Wendy Duflon, Elioterio Cauac, Celso Chaclan
Team members

Honduras

Ministry of Education of Honduras
Ramón Cálix Figueroa
Minister

Armando Euceda
Vice Minister of Education

Blanca Lilian Cabañas
Vice Minister of Education

Fourth School District of Comayagua
Emeldo Bustillo Maldonado
Departmental Director

Rosario Santos Berthand
Executive Director, ANEDH

Lourdes Suazo Rivera
Assistant, Preschool/Basic Education

Rosario Baide de Turcios
Technical Assistant

Maritza Celaya
Departmental Assistant, Salvemos Primer Ciclo

Darvin Omar Belioz
Technical Assistant

Noe Isaula Castillo
District Director

UPN (National Pedagogical University-Francisco Morazán)
Ramón Salgado Peña
Rector

UNAH (National Autonomous University of Honduras)
Ana Belén Castillo
Rector

FEREMA (Foundation for Education)
María Antonieta Bográn
Executive Director

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96

Danli Normal School

El Pescadero Elementary School, El Paraiso Department

Pan-American Agricultural School, Zamorano

COLPRUSUMAH (Federation of Teachers Associations)
Roberto Sortoreye
Director

Dolores Escobar
Training Director

Carlos Zuñiga
Secretary General of Training Institute

Luis Sazo
Secretary of Pedagogical Affairs

Adalid Vega
Technical Coordinator Training Institute

Meeting at MERECE:

Cooperación Española
Ramón Calero

GTZ (German Development Agency)
Karl Heinz

JICA (Japanese International Cooperation Agency)
Takeshi Sekiya

USAID/Tegucigalpa
Tim Humphreys
Director

Diane Leach
SO Education Leader

John Helwig
Education Advisor

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97

Mexico

Ministry of Education of Mexico (General Secretariat for Normal Education and Teacher Training)
Dra. Yolanda Campos
Technical Coordinator

Benemérita National Teachers School
Prof. Juan Manuel Rendón Esparza
Director

Anáhuac University
Luz del Carmen Dávalos
Director Department of Education

Ing. Sayde Barcelata Montaut
Director, Anahuac Virtual University

National Pedagogical University
Marcela Santillán Nieto
Rector

Technological Institute of Monterrey Virtual University
Ing. Carlos Cruz
Rector

Luis F. Alvarado
Director of Communications

Dr. Jaime Ricardo Valenzuela González
Professor, Doctoral Program in Education

Ing. Yolanda Martínez de Hernández
Director, Academic División

DGTVE (General Directorate of Educational Televisión)
Jaime Tacher Samarel
Executive Director

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98

ILCE (Latin American Institute for Educational Communication)
Guillermo Kelly
Executive Director

Lic. Felipe Campuzano Volpe
Coordinator, Research and Development

Jorge Durán
Director, Regional Cooperation

Juan H. Portillo Igreja
Deputy Director

School Network of Educational Information
Teresa Vázquez Mantecón
National Coordinator
Redes Escolares (ILCE)

World Bank
Eduardo Vélez Bustillo
Manager, Human and Social Development

IDB
Paulina Gonzalez-Pose
Specialist, Social Development-Education
Regional Operations

USAID/México
Paul White
Mission Director

Nicaragua

Ministry of Education, Culture, and Sports (MECD)
Emiliano Parta
Special Assistant to the Vice Minister

Myrna Somarriba
Director, Teacher Training

Ana Lisa Sánchez
Director, Normal Schools

INCAE (Central American Institute for Business Administration)
Dr. Roger Quant
President, Nicaragua Campus

Dr. José Exprúa
Dean, Academic Affairs

Franklin D. Roosevelt Normal School
Luz Aronsonth
Director

Darling Garcia
Deputy Director

León Normal School
Mother Superior Marta Lorena
Principal

National Autonomous University of León
Dr. Ernesto Medina
Rector

KACNA (American Chamber of Commerce in Nicaragua)
Lorena Zamora-Riva
Executive Director

EDUQUEMOS
Alicia Langrand
Executive Director

Aurora Gurdian
Director

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100

UNAN (National Autonomous University of Nicaragua)
Alejandro Genet
Dean of Education

URACCAN (University of the Autonomous Regions of the Caribbean Coast of Nicaragua)
Mirna Cunningham
Director

IDEUCA (Education Policy Institute of University of Central America)
Juan Arrien
Director

ANDEN (National Teachers Association)
José Antonio Zepeda
Director

Project BASE II
David Edgerton
Chief of Party

USAID/Managua
Danielle Roziewski
Education and Training Results Team Leader

Kate McDonald and Loretta Garden
Team Members

Panama

Ministry of Education of Panama
Mara I. Hawkins
National Assistant Director for Training and Professional Development

Nelly de Figueroa
Executive Assistant

National University of Panama
Xenia Mocote
Dean, Faculty of Education

Aníbal Secaido
Evaluation and Research Director

Edelma de León
Director of Teacher Training

University of Panama
Xenia de Moscote
Dean

Edilma de León
Director, School of Primary Education

Technological University of Panama
Ing. Salvador A. Rodríguez G.
Vice Dean for Academic Affairs

City of Knowledge
Jorge R. Arosemena R.
Executive Director

Temi Arjona Arosamena
Chief Technological Officer

Independent Teachers Association
Luis López
Secretary General

Casa Taller Foundation
Gloria Bejarano
Director

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102

U.S./Panama Chamber of Commerce
David J. Hunt
Executive Director

APEDE (Panamanian Association of Business Executives)
Fernando E. Maduro

Panamanian Book Chamber
Lorena Roquebert
Consultant

Panama's National Library Foundation
Nitzia Barrantes
Technical Director

World Bank
Lic. Alberto A. Tile P.
General Coordinator, Basic Education Project

UNDP
Stanley Muschett
Consultant to UNDP representative in Panama

Peace Corps
Raúl Ramírez
Training Director

U.S. Embassy
Jamari Salleh
Cultural Affairs Officer

USAID/Panama
Leo Garza
Mission Director

Blair Cooper
Program and Project Development Officer

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103

ANNEX 5: Country Profiles (with descriptions of institutions)

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104