



Academy for Educational Development

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**FINAL REPORT
FOLLOW-ON TRAINING ACTIVITIES
AFGRAD/ATLAS ALUMNI ASSOCIATION**

**Benin Training Program
Global Training for Development**

**Contract No FAO-I-00-96-90018-00
Temporary Delivery Order No. OUT-FAO-I-808-96-00018-00**

Submitted to **USAID/Benin**
Submitted by **Academy for Educational Development**
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FINAL REPORT OF FOLLOW-ON ACTIVITIES

October 10-14, 1998

Submitted by Denis J Hynes, consultant

Submitted to Jan Sanford, Delivery Order Manager/AED

Contract Number FAO-1-00-96-900 18-00

Project Global Training for Development/Benin

Delivery Order Number OUT-FAO-I-808-96-000 18-00

Executive Summary

AED, in collaboration with a local consulting firm (Africa Consulting Group [ACG]) and with assistance from the USAID Mission in Benin, designed, organized and delivered a five day technical assistance seminar on behalf of the Benin ATLAS/AFGRAD Alumni Association. Twelve (12) alumni group members attended the seminar, which was held at the International Conference Center in Cotonou from Saturday, October 10 through Wednesday, October 14, 1998. The goal of the activity was to strengthen the organizational, professional and managerial capacities of the Benin ATLAS/AFGRAD Alumni Association (B4A) members as well as the organization's institutional capacity to function as an independent non-governmental organization (NGO). In terms of specific objectives, the seminar sought to

- build capacity in *participatory training methods*,
- build capacity in *designing and preparing project proposals* (specifically for the US donor community),
- build capacity in preparing position papers for *advocacy* purposes

This goal and these objectives respond directly to USAID/Benin's Special Objective 1, "to improve governance and democracy" and contribute directly to achieving the Intermediate Result of "strengthening civil society through NGO capacity building". Seminar results include (a) selected participants designed and delivered participatory management training sessions, (b) all participants produced a draft for project proposal on decentralization, and (c) participants agreed to produce a position paper on merit promotion in the public sector.

1 Activity Design and Organization

A CONTENT ISSUES

The activity was composed of three distinct modules: Training of Trainers, Project Design and Preparation and Applied Advocacy Skills.

Commentary and Justification

● In the evaluation of the first phase of USAID's BINGOs project (implemented by Africare), it was noted that Benin lacked a pool of trainers who were familiar with US-style participatory management training methods and approaches. In Benin, the AFGRAD/ATLAS alumni group constitutes a particularly fertile resource base for such a pool to emerge. Besides being US-trained and having attended US management training events, these alumni are in key government and private sector positions. Thus it was a natural design choice to begin with a TOT module in order to build on USAID's significant investments in these alumni. Individually, members can apply these skills in their own organizations. Institutionally, the Alumni Group can offer to recruit talented bi-lingual trainers for interested agencies from their own member list.

During the second day of the activity, three (3) participants demonstrated their preparation and stand-up delivery skills in a small practicum.

● The need to be able to secure outside support is crucial to the institutional survival of the alumni group. The most effective way to begin is to identify, design and prepare a project proposal document which would finance key activities to further the capacity-building process and establish the group's capacity to manage donor-provided resources. In fact, there is at least one USAID-financed program, operational since 1992, which could support a Benin Alumni Group Initiative, namely, the ATLAS grants program.

Thus the second module concentrated on project design skill-building and produced two outcomes: (1) participant consensus on the identification of an alumni-implemented project activity which would address an issue of national importance as well as build capacity in the group, and (2) a project design framework which would guide the actual writing and submission of a proposal. The group finished the framework through the listing of project activities (Appendix 1). Next steps include finishing the proposal in French and sending it to me at AED by November 1, and I promised a finished English version which I would send by E-mail to the group by November 8.

● The third area of capacity-building derives from USAID/Benin's focus on strengthening civil society by promoting advocacy skills among NGOs. Here the outcome was a decision to issue a position paper on an important national policy issue, namely the adoption of a merit system for promotions within the civil service.

Overall design

Module #1 participatory training/training of trainers (1.5 days)

Module #2 project design/preparation skills (2.5 days)

Module #3 applied advocacy skills (1 day)

B PROCESS ISSUES

The key to fruitful collaboration is partnership, and from the beginning AED sought an NGO partner to provide guidance at every step of the planning process. USAID/Benin recommended the Africa Consulting Group whose Executive Director is an ATLAS alumnus and also the AAI Representative in Benin, Mr. Michel Dognon. Most of the major ideas for session planning and venue selection are from ACG, and the Academy is grateful for this collaboration.

It was also recognized that by sharing the planning process, AED was also building capacity at ACG for future collaborations. Moreover, it was explicitly understood that by featuring Mr. Dognon as a Co-Facilitator, AED was promoting TOT skills within the alumni group prior to the sessions themselves. Mr. Dognon also represented the interests of the Alumni Group to USAID/Benin.

C LOGISTICS

Through ACG, AED secured a very comfortable space at Cotonou's International Conference Center, and the sessions were offered as a five-day activity beginning on Saturday, October 10, 1998 through Wednesday, October 14, 1998, session hours were from 8:30 to 14:30. This design was adopted as the only practical solution to the problem of securing participant attendance in a context where most alumni have regular jobs in the public and/or private sectors. ACG identified a list of twenty (20) potential candidates, invited seventeen (17), and secured the participation of twelve (12).

Chez Maman Benin, a local restaurant, provided an amplified coffee-break and lunch for participants. No per diem was offered, with the exception of one participant who had come from Parakou to attend the seminar.

D LANGUAGE

Although a strong argument could be made that the training should have been given in English--given that all participants were US-trained alumni--AED felt that the possible multiplier effects of the activity would be greater if the sessions were given first in French. Accordingly, AED brought two principal training materials from the US:

Brinkerhoff and Tuthill's *La Gestion Efficace de Projets de Developpement* and CEDPA's *Formation des Formateurs Pour le Developpement*

E MEETINGS WITH USAID/BENIN

(A) Bamako I met with Georgette POKOU (Basic Education Specialist) and H elene DONHOSSOU (Training Assistant) during the USAID Regional Education and Training Conference, here the main topic was the state of the USAID-AED Delivery Order and the AMEX sub-contract situation. But I did cover some familiar ground concerning the internal politics of the alumni group in Benin, a group I knew from having worked with them in 1996. Basically the group is split into two factions: those supporting the founder of the Alumni Group, Fran oise MEDEGAN (who left as Alumni President to assume a highly visible job at the Presidential Palace as Special Advisor to President Kerekou for Public Relations) and those supporting the actual president, M. Apollinaire DATONDJI, who is a civil servant in the Bureau des Mines. So I understood that any meeting of the alumni for capacity-building could be threatened by one group or the other. Ms. DONHOSSOU strongly recommended that I contact M. Michel DOGNON, who is an ATLAS alumnus, a member of the Alumni Association as well as a director of a local consulting firm.

(B) Cotonou I first met with Ms. Yvette N. Malcioln, the Human Resources Development Officer (USAID Direct Hire), and shared with her my ideas on the design of the activity (TOT, project design and advocacy), later we were joined by Marty Schulman, her supervisor and an old friend from USAID/Togo and REDSO/WCA (Abidjan). The Mission's main concern is to energize the B4A, to get them operational, to make them into a functioning NGO. We scheduled a later meeting with heads of the SO and SpO teams (democracy and governance, basic education and health), at that meeting was Mr. Reuben Johnson, Helene, Yvette, and the leader of the D and G team whose name I don't recall but who stressed the Mission's interest in advocacy training. The teams were very supportive of the idea that a project proposal might be the kind of capacity-building activity which could bridge some of the factional issues, what was needed was an activity which B4A could implement but which would also provide capacity enhancement for the institution. One national issue which the SO team leaders discussed was the move to decentralization, a law had recently been passed and soon powers which had been vested only in central and regional authorities would now be passed on to local institutions—institutions whose personnel had not been afforded any special training by the state to assume these tasks. I suggested that in the project design phase of the training—Module 2—we (the trainers) could suggest topics of relevance (e.g., decentralization) which might allow the group to reach consensus and to decide on a proposal.

F OTHER MEETINGS

- Mme Jocelyne S. ZINSOU, Director, AXE Consultants International

I met with Mme Zinsou in an effort to lay the groundwork for direct AED-AXE collaborative possibilities in any future in-country training activities, given the problems surrounding the AMEX sub-contract. I also wanted to promote the idea that AXE would benefit by collaborating with other firms (notably ACG) which would be better suited to monitoring

students who had been trained in the U S (I was thinking specifically of the upcoming AED evaluation and Ron Grosz's trip) I sympathized with AXE's complaints after setting up a number of training activities, AXE was told by USAID that AMEX would no longer be responsible for organizing the already-planned series of workshops throughout the country USAID removed these from the AED Delivery Order and placed them in the CLEF Project portfolio Not only had AXE spent its own money to set up the workshops, it now had to notify all participants that the dates and venues would change, its local reputation had been put at risk because of the AMEX sub-contract

I invited Mme Zinsou to attend the seminar if she wanted

G AGENDA, CAPACITY-BUILDING SESSIONS FOR THE AFGRAD/ATLAS ALUMNI GROUP

Day One **Saturday, 10 October 1998**
International Conference Center, Cotonou

Facilitators Denis J HYNES, Academy for Educational Development (Washington, D C)
Michel DOGNON, Africa Consulting Group (Cotonou)

08 00 Welcome and Introduction (Denis)
-- Goal, objectives, expectations, norms, and administrative issues

Module #1 the Methodology of Participatory Training

Brainstorming why is participatory training an important skill in today's Benin? (Denis and Michel)

08 30 Small groups exercise dynamics of participatory training (Michel, Denis)
How to reach consensus
-- Group A USA/Benin political cultures
-- Group B local politics
-- Group C future possibilities for the Alumni Group

09 00 Small groups report back, plenary session (Denis)

09 30 Basic principles of adult learning (Michel)

09 50 Case Study Education in Benin

- 10 30 Coffee break
- 11 00 Module/session design I how to define module/session objectives--for facilitators and participants (Denis)
- 11 30 Module/session design II how to choose/modif~ a particular training method (Michel)
- 12 00 Practicum Role play (Michel, Denis, volunteers)
- 12 30 Lunch (discussions continue)
- 13 30 Stand-up training skills tips on how to lead a group (Denis)
- 14 00 Group selection for next day's practicum (Denis and Michel)
-- explanation of roles and responsibilities
- 14 30 End of Session

Day Two Sunday, October 11, 1998
International Conference Center, Cotonou

- 08 00 Recap of yesterday's sessions, questions, and introduction to the practicum (Denis)
Criteria
Materials prepared
Climate setting
Session objectives clear
Presentation clear, succinct
Use of an appropriate training method
Comfort in stand-up situation/feedback
- 08 15 Practicum A delivery of a training session (30 minutes)
- 08 45 Practicum B delivery of a training session (30 minutes)
- 09 15 Practicum C delivery of a training session (30 minutes)
- 09 45 Feedback from facilitators
- 10 00 Plenary Session questions/comments on participatory training techniques,

distribution of Training of Trainers manual, end of Module #1 (Denis and Michel)

10 30 Coffee break

Module #2 Project Design and Preparations Skills

(Context small projects, implementable within 24 months, with a budget ceiling of \$100,000, donor community audience assumed to be in the U S)

11 00 Introduction the "Project" concept (Denis)
-- brainstorming
-- group definition

11 30 Small Groups Exercise (cf the work of Group C on Saturday)
-- task elaborate three models/approaches for a project activity which would help the Benin AFGRAD/ATLAS alumni group become an operational NGO (Report and consensus for 2 00 PM session, below)

12 00 Particularities of project design/presentation for US donor communities (Denis)

12 30 Lunch (discussions continue)

13 30 Problem identification and project objectives (Denis)

13 45 Case study critical analysis of alumni group's project (already submitted)

14 00 Plenary Session Consensus on a Project Model for the AFGRAD/ATLAS Group (Denis and Michel)

14 30 End of Session

Day Three Monday, October 12, 1998
International Conference Center, Cotonou

08 30 Recap (Denis, Michel)

08 40 Project Design Writing Seminar I (small groups)
background on Benin, context of democratisation and emerging civil society,
Benin alumni Group vision/mission, identification of problem, strategy/approach,
justification

- 09 30 Groups report back (Michel)
Open session debates, synthesis, text adapted and adopted
- 10 30 Coffee break
- 11 00 How to prepare a Project Description (Denis) Goal, objectives, activities, results,
impact, how the project is the resolution of the identified problem
- 11 30 Project Design Writing Seminar II (small groups) Project Description
- 12 30 Lunch (discussions continue)
- 13 30 Plan of Work (Denis)--must be linked to objectives/activities
- 14 00 Project Design Writing Seminar III The Plan of Work
- 14 30 End of session

Day Four Tuesday, October 13, 1998
International Conference Center, Cotonou

- 08 30 US Donor Community Expectations Financial Plan (Denis)
-- role play (Michel, Denis, plus volunteers)
-- ATLAS grants specific requirements
- 09 30 Project Design Writing Seminar IV (small groups)
Reasonable, viable financial plan for the Benin Alumni Group's project
- 10 00 The Budget basic considerations (Denis)
- 10 30 Coffee break
- 11 00 Budget presentation hints for proposals submitted to the US donor community
(Denis)
- 11 30 Final Step the Executive Summary (Denis)
- 12 00 Project Design Writing Seminar VI (small groups) One page Executive Summary
- 12 30 Lunch
Break into specific writing teams

Objective finish draft of the entire proposal

14 30 End of session

Day Five **Wednesday, October 14, 1998**
International Conference Center, Cotonou

08 30 Recap End of Module #2

Module #3 Applied Advocacy Skills

8 45 Why "Advocacy"? a USAID perspective (Denis)

09 00 Why "Advocacy" in Benin? (Michel)

09 15 Plenary Session/Brainstorming meanings of advocacy and uses for advocacy

10 00 Applied advocacy how to fashion a position paper for the media

10 15 Practicum Plenary Session (participant as facilitator)

Brainstorming priority list of issues/topics/problems which the group as a whole feels strongly about and on which some degree of consensus is possible

Identify those issues which unite the group

--as citizens of Benin

--as former students in the US as current members of the Alumni Group

--as current members of the alumni group

Identify one issue on which the group can reach consensus

11 00 Advocacy Skills Writing Seminar I (small groups)
Prepare a Draft Position Paper for diffusion to the media

12 30 End of Module #3, lunch (discussions continue)

13 30 Evaluation of Capacity-Building Activities (30 minutes)

14 00 Feedback on the Evaluation Results by the facilitators

14 30 End of Capacity-Building Program

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Participant List

Mr Apollinaire DATONDJI (President, Benin ATLAS/AFGRAD Alumni Association)

Ms Françoise MEDEGAN, (Founder, B4A)

Ms Claudine SOTINKON

Ms Ursule YEKPE

Ms Alice IGUE

Ms Rachidatou LADJOUAN

Ms Eliane da CONCEICAO

Ms Mauricette MONGBO

Mr Ambroise AKPATCHA

Mr Maxime HOUINATO

Mr Job SAGBOHAN

Mr Joel VIGNON

Budget

(a) Senior Facilitator	
● salary 18 days @ \$320/day	\$ 5,760 00
● air travel DC-Cotonou-DC	2,808 50
● perdiem @ \$123/day x 15	1,845 00
● pre-departure expenses	266 02
● arrival US expenses	<u>157 52</u>
	<i>\$10,837 04</i>
(b) Materials (US)	
● <i>La Gestion Efficace</i> (copyright)	100 00
● <i>Formation des Formateurs</i>	150 00
Excess Baggage	<u>300 00</u>
	<i>550 00</i>
(c) In-country Expenses	
● Bank charges	94 48
● Communications	162 12
● Transportation	142 41
● Co-facilitator (consultant)	277 78
● Local firm (preparations/logistics)	183 52
● Seminar space rental	462 96
● Flip charts (2) rental	111 11
● Bottled water/sessions	46 30
● Supplies	
(pens, paper, flip-chart paper, markers)	58 57
● Meals (coffee-break+lunch, catered)	753 70
● Local perdiem (1 out-of-town participant)	74 07
● Photos	14 81
● Photocopy costs	<u>13 92</u>
	<i>\$2,295 75</i>
<i>Total costs (a+b+c) = \$13, 682 79</i>	

Outcomes, Results and Follow-On

●Evaluations the activity was well-received, and judged to be both relevant to the group's institutional needs as well as professionally organized and delivered (source 8 evaluations completed) It should be pointed out that the participants were very sophisticated in term of prior exposure to management training techniques and in terms of the substantive concerns of the seminar Hence sessions were often abbreviated to concentrate on group work

●Products the group produced a 3-page draft proposal outline in the area of decentralization (Appendix I) as well as a consensus on an issue to be the object of a position paper promotion by merit in the civil service) The group promised to finish the decentralization proposal by November 1, 1998 and to send it to AED/Washington for translation by November 8, 1998

●Next steps

- B4A to submit a completed project proposal in French to AED (Denis J Hynes)
- Hynes to make technical recommendations and to translate the proposal into English by November 8, 1998
- B4A to contact the ATLAS Grants Program for an application by November 15, 1998
- B4A to submit components of the proposal to USAID/Benin and to contact other local donors (Africare, World Education, CRS, LNDP, World Bank)
- B4A to research the "Promotion by Merit" issue (November-December 1998)
- B4A to produce a Position Paper on "promotion by merit" for local media (February 1999)
- BA4 to secure funding (whole, in part) for Decentralization Project (April 1999)
- B4A to begin implementation of Decentralization Project (May 1999)

APPENDIX 1
BENIN Trip Report

**PROJET D'APPUI A LA GOUVERNANCE
AU NIVEAU DECENTRALISE (PAGOD)**

Introduction

LA B4A/ Le PAGOD

I Background

Contexte de la décentralisation

- La loi sur la décentralisation
- Les perspectives sur son entrée en vigueur
- Les implications (contenu)

Présentation de la B4A

- Capacités et atouts de la B4A (dont les expériences extérieures de pays démocratiques que possèdent les membres)
- Intérêts de la B4A

II Problématique

- Pourquoi le projet?
- Nouveau contexte de gestion et d'administration des communautés locales
 - Nécessités des compétences
 - Difficultés liées à la décentralisation
 - Communautés locales
 - Conception programme (responsabilités des élus locaux)

IDEE séparation et contrôle de pouvoir → sensibilisation, fonction

III But du projet

Appuyer la bonne gouvernance et le plaidoyer en facilitant la responsabilisation des élus locaux et des populations à la base

IV Objectifs

- Améliorer les services rendus par les élus locaux aux clients
- Accroître le réflexe de compte rendu de la gestion de la part des élus locaux
- Diffuser (traduction et explication) les textes de la décentralisation
- Améliorer le niveau de participation des populations au développement de leur communauté

V Stratégies

- Privilégier l'utilisation des ressources internes de l'association
- Mettre l'accent sur la formation et l'échange d'expériences
- Tenir compte des données sociologiques du milieu

VI Activités

- Formation
- Identification
- Lieux
- Besoins
- Ressources
- Population cible
- Matériel
- Assistance conseils
- Suivi monitoring

VI Gestion

- B4A /BE = responsable du projet
- Comité Participatif de Pilotage
- B4A
- Bailleurs de fonds
- Représentants des bénéficiaires
- Chef de Projet

Schema • Comité Participatif de Pilotage (CPP)

- énonce les grandes orientations du projet
- recrute et évalue le Chef du Projet (CP)
- contrôle périodiquement les activités du CP
- rend compte au B4A
- suivi régulier des activités du Projet

Schema • Chef du Projet

- execute les activites du projet sur le terrain
- rend compte a la B4A
- recrute le personnel du Projet en collaboration avec le B4A
- Responsable du patrimoine du projet