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**FINAL REPORT  
BENIN TRAINING PROGRAM  
GLOBAL TRAINING FOR DEVELOPMENT**

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

Submitted to  
**USAID/Benin**

Submitted by  
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## INTRODUCTION

The Academy for Educational Development (AED) is pleased to present this final report summarizing the activities implemented under the USAID/Benin Global Training for Development (GTD) Contract No FAO-I-00-96-90018-00/Temporary Delivery Order No OUT-FAO-I-808-96-00018-00. The report is organized into sections which include the narrative on each delivery order component, a statistical summary, and the financial section.

Building on the past success of training as a key input for achieving results and the continuing human resource focus of USAID/Benin's portfolio, Benin GTD was structured around **five major components** in support of the Mission's one strategic objective and two special objectives. The components included:

- A Country Training Strategy and Annual Plan
- B In-Country Training
- C U S -Based Training
- D Training Impact and Evaluation
- E Follow-On Activities

These components support USAID/Benin's objectives:

- ▶ SO 1 Assist in ensuring that an increasing number of school-age children receive, on a more equitable basis, an education which prepares them for a productive role in their society
- ▶ SPO 1 Improve governance and reinforce democracy
- ▶ SPO 2 Expand the availability, quality, and use of family planning and HIV/AIDS prevention services

In keeping with USAID's overall goal to strengthen and sustain in-country institutional capacity, Benin GTD called for collaboration with Beninese firms for the implementation of all in-country activities. AED's subcontractor for the in-country training, AMEX International, identified several organizations and developed a formal subagreement with two— AXE Consultants International and CDM Consultants. These organizations provided technical, administrative, and logistical support for the in-country training programs.

Throughout the 17-month period of performance, the AED team successfully implemented almost all of the delivery order activities. At the Mission's direction, the actual training programs that were implemented differed from the original plan as attached to the delivery order. Some programs were postponed, others were replaced altogether with different programs. However, all training activities conducted were successful. Consultants were fielded to complete the impact evaluation and the follow-on activities, and AXE was contracted to execute the follow-on survey of training programs implemented on the project.

Implementation of the Benin GTD delivery order was not without some problem areas. The team

met with certain constraints when trying to develop the country training plan and as a result, the final training plan document was not completed. Efforts to reinforce the training capabilities of Beninese firms fell short of Mission expectations due to a number of factors including insufficient budgeted time to work with AXE and CDM as well as misunderstandings about the capabilities of these firms to support the requirements of USAID training contracts. Both of these matters are discussed in detail in the narrative section of this report.

We have organized the narrative section according to the five delivery order components. Each section includes an overview of what was accomplished, constraints encountered and any conclusions or lessons learned that can help guide future training program efforts in Benin.

## NARRATIVE REPORT

### **A     *Country Training Strategy and Annual Plan***

In February and March 1998, AMEX's Delivery Order Manager, Andrew Gilboy, and Program Development Specialist, Patrice Zmitrovic, conducted a two-week mission to Benin. The purpose of this trip was to begin the process of developing a strategic approach to managing training within the parameters of the Mission's new Country Strategic Plan (CSP) and USAID's Best Practices for Results-Oriented Training. Upon arrival, we learned that the CSP had not yet been approved and would not be available to the team.

The AMEX team met with each Strategic Objective (SO) and Special Objective (SPO) team to determine their current and future activities. At that time, SO and SPO teams were in the process of completing the R4s which, combined with the fact that the CSP had not yet been approved, meant that a specific Training Plan for FY98 could not be finalized during the visit. In view of these constraints, the AMEX team left Benin with the understanding that they would continue working with each team via e-mail and future visits as the Results Packages were completed. It was understood that at some point in FY98, all planned training activities would be assembled into one document that would assist SO and SPO teams in tracking impact effectively and ensure that the Mission viewed its training intervention strategically across its three objectives.

During the visit, the AMEX team emphasized that a Country Training Strategy should not be limited to a document that captures all training for one moment in USAID's development year. Instead, it should be an institutionalized *process* where teams seek strategic approaches to getting results from training, rather than tracking simple training outputs. This concept was discussed at length during the departure meeting with the Acting Director at the completion of the two-week field visit. A detailed trip report, *Developing a Training Strategy for USAID/Benin*, was submitted in March 1998, and documents the findings and conclusions.

The AMEX team moved as far as they could during that field visit but it was not until September 1998, when there was no time left in the delivery order, that it was realized that the compilation of all planned training activities had not been completed. More systematic and scheduled follow up by the AMEX team after the initial mission would have ensured that the actual training plan was completed.

### **B     *In-Country Training***

#### **▶     Start-Up and Establishing Systems**

From September through October 1997, AMEX Delivery Order Manager Lorraine Denakpo and Program Development Specialist, Patrice Zmitrovic, traveled to Benin to prepare for the implementation of the proposed in-country training programs. Ms. Denakpo stayed for three weeks while Ms. Zmitrovic stayed for the full two months. The purpose of this trip was

- ▶ For the AMEX team to meet with each SO/SPO team and become acquainted with the Mission's program and strategic plan, and to establish a calendar of training activities within each team,
- ▶ To clarify roles, responsibilities and timelines for identified activities in FY97-98, under this delivery order,
- ▶ To develop terms of reference for in-country programs and to implement the first series of workshops,
- ▶ To identify and contract with one or more local NGOs or firms to provide technical and management support required to implement in-country activities, and
- ▶ To establish administrative, financial and logistical arrangements as well as identify professional trainers and facilitators in order to establish a small resource group of available in-country trainers

As a result of multiple meetings with the SO/SPO teams, a calendar for workshop activities was established. It was also agreed that the Mission and partner institutions would select the participants and would notify our in-country partner, AXE, of the attendees for upcoming training programs.

▶ **Identification of Training Providers, Trainers, and Training Sites**

The AED/AMEX team identified a number of potential **local training providers** or partners and agreed to use a process of interviewing and proposal review to select firms capable of providing technical and management support for the in-country training activities. This would provide USAID and its partners with high quality, well managed workshops, conferences and seminars at a reasonable cost and build Beninese capacity to manage USAID-funded in-country training.

AMEX identified **AXE Consultants International** to collaborate with USAID and other key partner institutions in the development of terms of reference, draft budgets, and to work with the training team on specific training activities. **CDM Consultants** was selected to assume the management of all funds for each training activity. In September 1997, the AMEX team met with AXE and CDM to develop a structure and formalize procedures for implementation of the Benin GTD in-country training component.

In order to ensure that local service providers could, in fact, provide the types and quality of services required and that they understood the policies and practices of USAID and the AED team, AMEX staff worked closely with the staff of AXE and CDM. They coached them in budgeting procedures for training activities, and provided the standards expected for each service provider, including the trainers. During the February/March 1998 visit by A. Gilboy and P. Zmitrovic, AMEX again met with AXE and CDM to review USAID procedures and regulations as well as to reinforce earlier discussions about USAID strategic objectives and their relationship to intermediate results and actual implementation of training and education programs. AMEX prepared a document entitled, *Who Does What to Make the Training Event a Success*, to be used as a guide and reference for AXE, CDM, and as well as AMEX, AED, and USAID. The document, which was included with the March 1998 trip report, clarified the roles and responsibilities of each organization in the process of

arranging and implementing in-country training programs

Throughout the delivery order, the AED team worked to strengthen the relationship with AXE and CDM. AMEX faced a considerable challenge in finalizing acceptable, legally binding contracts and instituting formal financial procedures with these organizations. Delays in transferring needed funds was a frustration to many. Sufficient time was not devoted to a true capacity building effort which would have made the partnerships more effective. One lesson to take from this experience is the need to set in place from the beginning a formal, written plan for training and collaboration so that all concerned are reminded of the dual purpose of the relationship to provide high quality, well-managed training while also building the capacity of the local organization(s) to carry out such training without on-going assistance from U.S. counterparts. *Who Does What to Make the Training Event a Success* was a useful tool but came a bit late in the process.

It is important to note, that in spite of the problems encountered, AXE performed very well. Workshops were technically well conducted, the training environment was supportive of learning and sharing information and experience, the quality of the trainers and facilitators was high. Similarly, where CDM was charged with distributing per diem and transportation reimbursements to participants and maintaining financial records, they also performed well.

The AMEX team also visited **potential training sites** in Cotonou, Bohicon and Abomey, Benin and met with the directors of several training centers, such as CEFORA and INFOSEC, sites where training programs were later held.

In addition to selecting partner organizations, the AMEX team identified more than 20 **Beninese consultants** to serve as Lead Facilitators and Trainers for the upcoming workshops. Of this group, in-depth interviews were conducted with 15 trainers and 4 were selected to make up the training team for the first workshop. Where appropriate, AXE selected trainers from this list for future training activities.

► **Implementation of In-Country Training Activities**

The AED team implemented a total of six in-country training programs. Of those, three were from the original delivery order training plan. Below is a brief summary of each program and the outcomes. They are organized according to each SO/SPO.

**DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE**

1	Workshop	<b>Benin Indigenous Non-Governmental Organization Strengthening (BINGOS)</b>
	Date	September 26-27, 1997
	Participants	45

SPO1 Improve Governance and Reinforce Democracy

IR Civil Society Strengthening through NGO Capacity Building

Objectives To bring together AFRICARE project members of the BINGOS project, representatives of BINGOS, as well as members who had been requested to leave the BINGOS project, representatives from PVOs and international NGOs, and a representative of the Ministry of Planning to

- ✓ review the results of the project and lessons learned, and to discuss the impact of the BINGOS project on participating NGOs, and
- ✓ make recommendations for further improvement on capacity building and institutional development to AFRICARE

Outcomes Participants were provided the opportunity to validate and discuss the BINGOS evaluation and opinion poll, to review outcomes and lessons learned and to discuss factors deemed important to the success of future BINGOS programs. The workshop contributed to increased participation of civil society in decision-making by strengthening NGO capacity to use past experience to inform strategic planning, and allowing them to participate in shaping the kinds and types of support received from donors.

Follow-up Interviews with AFRICARE and NGO staff who attended the workshop confirmed that workshop objectives were met. Several recommendations resulted from this workshop. For example, it was recommended that AFRICARE decentralize more to allow a greater connection with NGOs, and BINGOS should be extended to cover the whole national territory. These require a longer term for consideration and implementation. Other recommendations for changes in the program have resulted in AFRICARE undertaking a reorganization of activities by replacing the micro projects with advocacy programs.

Another result of this workshop was the selection of new NGOs to benefit from future BINGOS programs. The NGOs in attendance at the workshop, however, felt that AFRICARE's decisions were made without sufficient input from them, hence their needs were not met. AFRICARE believes that the negative reaction of the interviewed NGOs is at least partially caused by the fact that new NGOs were selected for future assistance, thus reducing the aid available to the old NGOs.

2	Workshop	<b>Code des ONGS</b>
	Date	December 16-19, 1997
	Participants	160

SPO1 Improve Governance and Reinforce Democracy  
IR Increased Participation of Civil Society in Decision-Making

Objectives To provide a technical forum for NGOs, Ministry representatives, PVOs and donor agencies to

- ✓ review the proposed replacement text and propose modifications recommended by the participants attending the seminar,
- ✓ discuss ethical standards and a code of conduct for all NGOs vis-a-vis their relationship with the State, and
- ✓ determine the form of partnership the NGOs wish to establish and carry out with the State and to begin to put into place mechanisms to actualize this collaboration

The forum was collaboratively financed by several donor agencies USAID assumed responsibility for providing logistical management of the forum and the compilation and dissemination of the proceedings

Outcomes The anticipated results were attained and all three texts presented were adopted by the assembly They consist of (1) a decree which provides for conditions and modalities of function by which NGOs and their sister organizations can legally exist, (2) the code of conduct for NGOs practicing in Benin, and (3) an accepted project proposal to develop a framework of agreement between the State and the NGOs

Follow-up An interview with the project leader indicated that the workshop objectives were met Recommendations to simplify certain of the adopted texts are now being acted upon

3	Workshop	<b>Seminaire de Formation des Verificateurs de la Chambres des Comptes et des Inspecteurs Generaux des Finances au Nouveau Plan Comptable (SYSCOA)</b>
	Date	January 18-30, 1998
	Participants	40

SPO1 Improve Governance and Reinforce Democracy

IR Mechanism to Promote Ethical Standards in Governance Strengthened

Objectives To conduct a 10-day training for examiners and inspectors from the Supreme Court's public finance inspection office and the Ministry of Finance's Inspector General's office to

- ✓ provide an overview of the principles and mechanisms of private accounting systems,
- ✓ provide training in the SYSCOA principles, to be applied to both the private and public sectors,
- ✓ apply these newly acquired skills and practices through practical exercises and the use of adult participatory methods, and
- ✓ provide initial training in the new computer system (AZUR) established for SYSCOA

Outcomes The participants were trained in all the elements of the new auditing system, SYSCOA They received both theoretical training as well as hands-on application of both the new auditing procedures as well as the new computer system In the final evaluation, overall satisfaction of the

training was 66% and material judged useful and valid for the participants' daily work, rated 57%

Follow-up Approximately nine months after the training, participants still reported that the training objectives had been met and they were prepared to use their practical training on the job. However, the new system will not be in effect until 1999, so the participants have not yet been able to actually apply the knowledge they gained in the workshop. If possible, once the system is up and running, follow-up visits with a day of "refresher" training would be beneficial given the considerable time gap between the original training and actual on-the-job applications.

4      Workshop      **Colloque pour les Elections au Benin (CENA)**  
Date                  February 13-14, 1998  
Participants        150

SPO1 Improve Governance and Reinforce Democracy  
IR      Effectiveness and Independence of the Legislative Reinforcement

Objectives To bring together several key partners and institutions involved in the electoral procedural system, including the National Assembly, to

- ✓ share information on the new electoral law,
- ✓ identify problems and constraints which inhibit open and fair elections and to examine and recommend solutions that contribute to a successful election, and
- ✓ develop recommendations and an action plan for institutionalizing the CENA

The forum was jointly financed by several donor agencies. USAID/Benin, through Benin GTD, contributed the logistical management of the conference as well as the preparation of the final report. Several other countries in the region sent representatives to participate in this workshop. They are interested in the electoral reorganization that is taking place in Benin and may be interested in replicating this workshop in their own countries.

Outcomes Recommendations from the conference were accepted in a plenary session and transmitted to appropriate authorities for review and further action. The recommendations were

- a To reinforce the autonomy of CENA and to suppress interference of the Constitutional Court which, in the future, should limit itself to constitutional issues such as regular oversight and scrutiny in order to verify election results, and making the final pronouncement in case of a contentious election
- b In the case where the institutionalization of CENA is not possible, create a technical structure empowered to provide a continuum of management to serve both during and between elections. The seat of this structure could be based within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs,
- c Review the modality of designating members to CENA, keeping in mind all the new actors in play, i.e., majority, opposition, and civil society,

- d Involve women in the management of CENA,
- e Reinforce and encourage the media too participate in the electoral process, and
- f Encourage the role of civil society in the education process and allow for the NGOs to play a greater role in monitoring and observing elections by providing them with some financial support

Follow-up AXE met with the beneficiary NGO, the Cercle des Inter-Dependants (CID), to evaluate the workshop Satisfaction with the workshop was high as it provided a forum for the participants to review the problems of the electoral system, and to work together on corrections A draft of a law resulted from the workshop recommendations and was submitted to the government delegates

5 Workshop **National Forum For the Mobilization of Civil Society to Fight Against Corruption (FONAC)**  
 Date March 25-27, 1998  
 Participants 300

SPO1 Improve Governance and Reinforce Democracy  
 IR Increased Participation of Civil Society in Decision-Making

Objectives To provide an opportunity for a number of key partners, including the Cellule de la Moralization de Corruption de la Republique, the Office of the President of Benin, members of civil society, NGO's and donor agencies to

- ✓ reflect on problems that impede the effective functioning of public administration,
- ✓ make recommendations for improvement of public administration

This conference was financed by a number of donor agencies USAID/Benin assumed responsibility for conference logistics, secretarial support and publication and dissemination of the final report

A major constraint in preparing for this workshop was an extremely short lead time The original date set by the Mission was March It was then changed to April but was finally set for March again with only two weeks to finalize all aspects of the program A five-week lead time would have been optimal, nevertheless, arrangements were finalized and the conference was held on schedule

Outcomes Conference objectives were met and an essential recommendation put forth was that an association be established having as its core goal to combat corruption A committee was formed to carry out the resulting recommendations

Follow-up AXE interviewed this committee to evaluate the effectiveness of the workshop The committee is extremely happy with the workshop results and has conducted all the tasks it was given at the workshop An association to combat corruption in Benin has been legally formed and an office has been opened in Cotonou

## BASIC EDUCATION

1      Workshop      **Federation Nationale des Associations de Parents d'Eleves (FENAPEB)**  
Date      December 1-5, 1997  
Participants      35

SO 1      Improve Basic Education

IR      Civil Participation in Primary Education Reform Increased

Objectives Representatives from the Administrative Councils (CA) of Parent-Teacher Associations from each region were to be trained in

- ✓ techniques and methodologies of financial and administrative management to include basic financial management skills, bookkeeping and account management, and
- ✓ training skills (through a Training of Trainers component) so that CA's would have the necessary skills to return to their respective regions and begin to transfer the applied skills and knowledge to district levels

Outcomes For those participants who persevered, this workshop was well received and met all objectives. The workshop content gave participants a deeper understanding of general management and financial administration, and in particular, issues directly related to school administration. In addition, the group received training in managing associations, animation techniques and how to conduct meetings. The workshop underscored the need for on-going and permanent dialogue between Parent-Teacher Associations and the Federation, the need for more training in strategic management and training of trainers for their leaders.

Follow-up Ten months after this workshop took place, participants interviewed by AXE reported that the workshop had been very beneficial. Changes and improvements have occurred following the seminar for all of the participants. They felt that they have a better understanding of what the Federation can be, have increased and improved their meetings, settled some conflicts between the Federation and teachers, and have a much better presentation of their budgets. However, there have been difficulties in using all the ideas and information they received. In some places, teachers were opposed to the budgetary recommendations made. Therefore, the Federation selected a representative to work out a budget. A challenge they now face is that of keeping everyone informed and aware of the new methods because the communities are spread out all over the country. There were many recommendations for the future. Efforts are being made to popularize and repeat the seminars, and to make them longer.

2      Workshop      **FENAPEB/ Regional Preparation for the Annual General Assembly**  
Date      September 9/various dates in October & November 1998

AED only received notification of these workshops nine days prior to the start of the first one. In July 1998, USAID/Benin had discussed these programs with AXE but no information or training

request was communicated to AED until September. While AED, AMEX, and AXE were prepared to work with the short lead time, it was determined that there would not be sufficient obligated funds in our delivery order in time to run the workshops as well as carry out other activities already underway. The Mission therefore, ran these workshops through another contract (the CLEF project). A more regular review of projected and planned activities by the AED team would likely have avoided this situation.

## HEALTH

Although the Health team had tentatively identified training activities to be funded under the Benin GTD program, no activity was ever undertaken due, in part, to the lack of any formal training requests being submitted to the AED team.

### *C U S - Based Training*

U S -based training for Benin GTD consisted of both long-term academic and short-term technical training. AED assumed responsibility for five long-term academic degree participants from the Partners for International Education and Training (PIET). The originally planned short-term programs were replaced with a conference and study tour.

#### ▶ **Short-Term Training**

1	Conference	<b>USAID Lessons Without Borders Conference on Micro-Enterprise Development, Growth and International Trade</b>
	Date	April 29 - May 1, 1998
	Participants	2

#### SPO 1 Improve Governance and Reinforce Democracy

On April 8, AED received a request to arrange for two women to attend this USAID-sponsored conference in Maine from April 29-May 1, 1998. Because of difficulties with the receipt of a DHL package containing registration and travel documents and airline scheduling, the women arrived half-way through the conference and were extremely jet-lagged from their trip. AED did everything possible to support the two participants, locating helpful conference staff, and providing assistance with travel arrangements for their return travel.

Objectives To provide Ms. Koubourath Osseni (business woman and former Minister of Social Affairs), and Ms. Grace Lawani, President of AFACB/Association of Business Women), an opportunity to interact with other business women and men from around the world and to hear about the experiences of others in developing new business and entering the international trade arena.

Outcomes Although these participants were only able to attend the final day and a half of the three-day conference, they both reported that the conference had been beneficial in exposing them to some

new ideas and providing them an opportunity to meet and talk with fellow professionals

2      Workshop      **USAID/USIA Observation Study Tour on *The Legislative Process***  
Date              August 2 - August 24, 1998  
Participants      4

#### SPO 1 Improve Governance and Reinforce Democracy

Objectives In a joint effort by USAID and USIA, four high-level participants, all affiliated with the National Assembly, were scheduled for an observation study tour on the subject of the legislative process that would enable them to

- ✓ acquire a better understanding about various aspects of the legislative process at both the federal and state levels,
- ✓ learn how bills are introduced, debated and amended in both the House of Representatives and the Senate, and the stages bills undergo to become laws,
- ✓ learn about the electoral process, the laws that formulate, govern and enforce the policy embodied by the Federal Elections Commission, including campaign disclosure requirements, public financing of presidential campaigns, and contributions to political parties,
- ✓ understand the role of NGOs in maintaining and strengthening democratic institutions abroad, particularly in Africa,
- ✓ ascertain the influence of lobby groups in shaping federal legislation,
- ✓ understand the relationship between the executive and legislative branches of government, and
- ✓ become more familiar with U S culture, ethnic and regional diversity, and observe how Americans live and function as a democratic, participatory society

Outcomes AED provided logistical and administrative support for this study tour with USIA's contractor, the African American Institute, organizing the actual training elements, appointments and overall schedule. The participants began their program in Washington, D C with visits to several congressional representatives and a variety of organizations including the national Democratic Institute, the International Foundation for Election Systems, and the Federal Election Commission. Their itinerary included Atlanta, Georgia, Sacramento and San Francisco, California, and Columbus, Ohio, where they met with a variety of state and local government officials and organizations. The program ended in Washington, D C and included a discussion with USAID officials on USAID's democracy and governance programs in Africa.

Exit questionnaires indicated a high level of satisfaction with the program. The participants had high praise for the caliber of the individuals and organizations they met and felt they came away with an enhanced understanding of the U S Congress and its functions, political parties, election systems, and state legislatures.

► **Academic Training**

AED assumed the administration and monitoring for **five Beninese students at Central State University in Wilberforce, Ohio**. All five were in their final year of a Bachelor's degree program in various fields. In addition to regular monitoring telephone calls, letters, and e-mail, AED visited these participants just prior to their graduation. The purpose of the visit was to help the participants solidify action plans that they could take with them and use as they re-entered the workforce in Benin. Without exception, these participants felt unprepared to return to the working world in Benin, believing that they had only "book knowledge" but lacked practical application of their newly acquired skills and knowledge. Each one requested permission to stay in the U.S. to engage in practical training for one to two months after graduation. USAID/Benin agreed to all requests for extensions for this purpose.

These participants also expressed concern about returning to Benin with only a Bachelor's degree. They felt it would be necessary to continue in graduate study in order to provide opportunities for career advancement. In fact, some of them had already received acceptances with full scholarships from excellent academic institutions for Master's degree programs. In spite of these plans, all participants returned to Benin upon completion of their practical training and in accordance with their agreement with USAID. Most of them have requested waivers of the J-1 residency requirement so they can pursue Master's degrees in the U.S. A brief synopsis of each participant's academic program under AED's management follows:

1	Name	<b>Richard Afanuh</b>
	PIO/P	<b>698-0463-1-30047</b>
	Degree/Field of Study	<b>B.S. / Computer Science</b>
	Date of Graduation	<b>June 1997</b>

After graduating, Mr. Afanuh arranged an internship with AT&T in Cincinnati, Ohio, which was to end in November. He was granted permission by USAID/Benin to extend the internship through December 1997, at which time he was to return to Benin. In June 1998, AED learned from the Mission that Mr. Afanuh had not yet reported his return to USAID/Benin. Through e-mail correspondence, we learned that he was in Europe and planned to be back in Benin within a matter of weeks. USAID/Benin confirmed that he did return to Benin and reported to the USAID office.

2	Name	<b>Rodolphe Akoutey</b>
	PIO/P	<b>698-0463-1-30046</b>
	Degree/Field of Study	<b>B.S. cum laude / Water Resources Management</b>
	Date of Graduation	<b>June 1998</b>

When AED took over Mr. Akoutey's file from PIET in July 1997, we arranged a four-week internship for him with the United States Department of Agriculture through the International Center for Water Resources and Management at Central State University. Following the internship, Mr. Akoutey completed his final year of coursework and was awarded his Bachelor's degree with



engineering workshops for undergraduate students throughout the summer term. He returned to Benin at the end of August 1998, intending to petition the Mission for a waiver of the two-year residency requirement, so as to return to the U.S. to pursue graduate study on a scholarship.

#### ***D Training Impact Evaluation***

An impact evaluation of U.S.-based academic training completed between October 1991 and the present under the AFGRAD, ATLAS and HRDA projects, was conducted by AED in October 1998. Mr. Ronald Grosz, a former USAID Program Analyst, traveled to Benin October 26, 1998, to conduct this impact evaluation. Mr. Grosz met with Mission staff and SO/SPO teams to review his intended methodologies for gathering and analyzing the data.

Objectives To assess former participants' satisfaction with their degree programs and measure the impact of this long-term training on their leadership, technical abilities, and professional capacity as it relates to improved organizational abilities to support sustainable development. The scope of work for this evaluation was written through a consultative process between AED and USAID/Benin.

Outcomes A total of 32 participants were surveyed – every returnee that could be located and was willing to participate in the survey out of the list of 79 provided by USAID. Mr. Grosz developed an evaluation questionnaire, administered it, conducted focus groups, and analyzed the data to prepare a report on his findings. Working closely with AFGRAD/ATLAS alumni group members, he identified and hired alumni Michel Dognon, Eliane Douton, and Apollinaire Datondji and trained them in evaluation techniques. They assisted Mr. Grosz in interviewing former participants and their supervisors regarding the impact participants' training had on their personal and professional performance, their places of employment, and thus, on Benin.

The Africa Consulting Group, a small NGO founded by Mr. Michel Dognon, was contracted to provide logistical and administrative support to Mr. Grosz.

A summary of the results includes evidence that

- ✓ overall, the long-term training program is successful in achieving intended results,
- ✓ over 96% of the participants, and most USAID staff and key informants, were satisfied or very satisfied with the program,
- ✓ over 34% of the participants did not receive a predeparture orientation and over half felt they were only somewhat prepared for their U.S. programs,
- ✓ participants have gotten promotions, increased responsibilities, and/or increased incomes because of the training, many have started their own firms since returning to Benin,
- ✓ supervisors and participants provided many examples of ways in which the participants have personally done something to improve the performance or capacity of their organizations.

- ✓ 88% have formally or informally shared their knowledge or experience with co-workers or community members,
- ✓ impact results seem more obvious and/or more achievable in the private sector than in the public sector, due to a variety of factors including a climate conducive to applying new skills and techniques on the job,
- ✓ there are definite associations between the training program and results at the national level and on the future of sustainable development in Benin

A full report of the Impact Evaluation findings was sent to the Mission, November 30, 1998

## ***E Follow-on Activities***

### ▶ **AFGRAD/ATLAS Alumni Association**

In October 1998, AED fielded Mr Denis Hynes to implement post-training follow-on activities for Benin AFGRAD/ATLAS alumni. AED identified a local partner, the Africa Consulting Group, to work closely with us in the design, planning, and implementation of this activity. Mr Michel Dognon, Executive Director of the Africa Consulting Group, is an ATLAS alumnus. He made significant contributions throughout the planning process and co-facilitated the training modules with Denis Hynes. The planning stage included meetings with USAID and groups of alumni to discuss the venue, outline, schedule and goals for the proposed training. USAID training staff were also invited to participate in the training modules.

Objectives To organize and deliver a series of capacity-building sessions for members of the ATLAS/AFGRAD Alumni Association to

- ✓ strengthen the professional, organizational, and managerial skills of USAID-trained alumni,
- ✓ strengthen the capacity of the Alumni Association to function as an independent NGO,
- ✓ build capacity in participatory training methods,
- ✓ build capacity in designing and preparing project proposals,
- ✓ build capacity in preparing position papers for advocacy purposes

Outcomes Three modules comprised this five-day seminar including sessions on Training of Trainers, Project Design and Preparation, and Applied Advocacy Skills. Twelve alumni group members attended the seminar out of 17 invited. Selected participants designed and delivered participatory management training sessions, all participants produced a draft for a project proposal on decentralization, and all agreed to produce a position paper on merit promotion in the public sector. Actually producing the position paper has met with some obstacles due to some factionalism within the alumni group. The exercise was designed to promote team building and to test the working relationships without the on-site facilitation support of Denis Hynes. The position paper was not completed by the target date nor has it been received by AED as of the writing of this report.

AED recommends that USAID/Benin follow-up with Mr Michel Dognon to ascertain if the alumni group intends to complete the paper and proceed with the next steps identified during the training sessions

Evaluation questionnaires indicated that the seminar was well received, and judged to be both relevant to the group's institutional needs as well as professionally organized and delivered. A longer lead time for advertising the seminar may have allowed more alumni to participate.

The final report and evaluations for this activity have been submitted separately.

► **Survey of Training Events**

The follow-on survey of short-term training events implemented by the Mission was conducted by AXE on behalf of AED. This activity was originally in the AMEX subcontract scope of work but due to their delay in carrying it out, AED shifted responsibility directly to AXE.

Objectives To monitor and carry out a formative evaluation of the training events sponsored by USAID/Benin under the Benin GTD delivery order. The main tasks were to

- ✓ assess the impact of these activities on the performance of beneficiary institutions, organizations and individuals involved, and
- ✓ formulate specific recommendations to USAID/Benin in order to improve upon future efforts in these areas including measures to improve the use participants make of their new skills and knowledge.

Outcomes A summary of the preliminary findings is included above in the descriptions of each training program implemented. Each group of participants was queried as to whether the training met the stated objectives and how they have applied the training in their workplace or community. Where possible, AXE assessed the status of actions taken on recommendations that resulted from the various training events. As of the writing of this report, AXE has not completed its final report on this activity although the due date had been specified to ensure that the information could be incorporated into this final report. Once AED has received it, it will be translated and forwarded to USAID/Benin.

This activity would have been more beneficial to all concerned if it had been planned for as AMEX was planning each in-country training activity. A timetable for following up after each training activity had been completed should have been developed to include the date that follow on should begin, who would be responsible, and quarterly deadlines for reporting on follow-on results and recommendations. As an on-going activity, results and recommendations can then be fed back into the design and implementation of future training programs.

## ***F Lessons Learned and Recommendations***

We have indicated certain recommendations above but will use this section to summarize lessons learned and recommendations resulting from the implementation of this delivery order

- ✓ clarify roles and responsibilities early in the process
- ✓ identify one in-country coordinating institution
- ✓ time events to enable incorporation of lessons learned into on-going as well as future activities

1 The early clarification of roles and responsibilities with in-country partners is essential to good project management and implementation. To more effectively address matters of institutional capacity building, USAID/Benin and the local organizations would have been better served by an initial investment of at least six months in which the AED team would establish a temporary presence in Benin. This would have allowed activities to move forward while also providing time to assess the capabilities of in-country organizations, to define roles and responsibilities, and to agree on standard procedures. One approach would have been for the AED team to place a program development specialist in the AXE office for the initial months of the delivery order, thereby providing a kind of on-the-job training experience for AXE and jointly developing written guidelines for the design, implementation, reporting, and management of training activities. There are budget implications for such an approach but the longer term results would probably outweigh the additional up-front costs.

2 We support the approach of using multiple local partners to implement in-country training activities. Identifying one in-country coordinating institution is important to ensure that training requests are communicated to all appropriate parties in a timely manner and sufficient time is available for reviewing activity budgets and transferring funds to the appropriate training providers. AED was sometimes left out of the communication loop regarding upcoming training programs, leaving little time to provide a responsible review of funding and administrative needs. A more clearly defined coordinating role for AXE would have helped keep all parties informed of planned activities, would have strengthened AXE's liaison role with USAID regarding the training plan and anticipated changes, and would have provided a necessary focal point for monitoring progress on in-country activities.

3 Follow-on and follow-up activities provide valuable information that can be helpful to on-going as well as future programs. As the training program evaluations have indicated, the actual training events were successful and well received by the participants. The AFGRAD/ATLAS Alumni Association follow-on, the training event survey, and the impact evaluation have produced valuable information but were conducted late in the delivery order. This left little or no time to use the information and lessons from these activities in planning programs under this delivery order. It is the hope of the AED team that future USAID/Benin training and training related activities will benefit from the results of these activities.

## STATISTICAL SUMMARY

<b>Program</b>	<b># Participants</b>	<b># Days</b>
<b><i>US Training</i></b>		
Academic/Central State University	5	n/a
The Legislative Process study tour	4	20
USAID Lessons Without Borders Conference	2	3
<b><i>In-Country Training</i></b>		
BINGOS	45	2
Code des ONGS	160	4
SYSCOA	40	10
CENA	150	2
FONAC	300	3
FENAPEB	35	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>741</b>	