

Holistic Options for Primary Education (HOPE)/ Options
Holistiques pour L'Éducation Primaire
Democratic Republic of the Congo/République Démocratique du Congo

Quarterly Report
October - December 2005



HOPE representatives and USAID Education Team Leader Jill Jupiter-Jones met with Vice-Governor Didace Kaningini Kyoto in Bukavu, South Kivu in October.

Associate Cooperative Agreement No. 623-A-05-00348-00

Contacts:

Rebecca Cusic, Chief-of-Party
rcusic@edc.org

Helen Boyle, Project Director
hboyle@edc.org

Stephanie Foerster, Program Manager
sfoerster@edc.org



Table of Contents

1. Overview	3
2. Accomplishments by Program Result	4
Project Operational on the Ground (Start-up)	4
Staffing.....	4
Posting of Expatriate Staff (IRC and EDC)	4
Recruitment and hiring of Local Staff (IRC and EDC)	4
Staff Orientation	5
Procurement	5
Office Setup	5
EDC-IRC Sub-Grant Agreement.....	6
School-Community Site Selection.....	6
USAID Result One: Access to Education Increased, Particularly for the Most Vulnerable Children	6
Sub-Result 1: Increased participation of vulnerable groups in education	6
1.1.a Integrate and adapt P4 and MRC methodologies into a single series of trainings for HOPE Project.....	6
USAID Result Two: School Fees Costs Borne By Parents Decreased Through Alternative Financing Mechanisms	7
USAID Result Three: Quality of Education Increased through Innovative Educational and Income Generating Activities	7
Sub-Result 1: IRI program providing instruction and support to hard to reach schools and communities is used on a regular basis	7
3.1.a. IRI Scriptwriter Training Workshop.....	7
3.1.g. Initial Recording of Programs for Formative Evaluation.....	7
Sub-Result 2: Inspectors and teachers trained and practicing active teaching methods in primary school grades 1-4.....	7
USAID Result Four: Policy Changes on School Fees at the Local and National Levels	7
3. Communications.....	8
4. M&E.....	8

1. Overview

During the first quarter of the HOPE Project, visits were made to all three site locations by EDC and IRC staff, both home-office and DRC-based, to initiate project start up. The month of October consisted primarily of partner meetings to review in detail project activities and contractual agreements. In addition, with the presence of home office staff from EDC, regional staff from IRC, the incoming HOPE Chief of Party, and IRC supervisory staff based in DRC, contact was initiated with international donors and organizations, the Ministry of Education, other NGOs working in education and/or in the South Kivu and Equateur regions, DRC government officials and USAID. In the process, the team was able to develop a concise, coherent explanation of the project to partners and stakeholders.

November included the posting of Aliou Tall, EDC Education Technical Advisor, and the beginning of administrative set up such as bank accounts, collection of estimates to facilitate procurement, and initiation of recruitment activities. December continued similar activities, but also concluded various purchases, confirmation and contractual arrangements related to office space, and negotiating contracts for certain local staff positions.

Highlights this quarter involved HOPE team members, along with USAID, meeting and introducing the HOPE project to the Governors and Provincial Education Directors of Equateur and Sud Kivu Provinces. In addition, initial contact with the Ministry of Education in Kinshasa resulted in obtaining 720 copies of the National Curriculum and supplementary Teachers' Guide for distribution to target schools.

The following report provides more detail of the progress of activities outlined in the annual work plan.

2. Accomplishments by Program Result

The following activities were undertaken and completed according to schedule in the HOPE Annual Work Plan submitted on 11-18-05.

Project Operational on the Ground (Start-up)
--

Staffing See Workplan Sub-result: Project Operational on the Ground Activities a., b., c., d., f., g., h., k

Posting of Expatriate Staff (IRC and EDC)

1. *Arrival of Training Advisor/South Kivu Field Coordinator.*
 - Mr. Aliou Tall arrived in Kinshasa on November 4, 2005 and joined Stephanie Foerster, acting COP, on recruitment, procurement and other start-up related activities. Aliou was officially posted to South Kivu in the last week of December, and was accompanied by the COP.
2. *Arrival of Chief of Party.*
 - Ms. Rebecca Cusic arrived in Kinshasa December 5th and immediately took up work on start up activities, which included travel to Mbandaka and Bukavu.
3. *International IRC staff deployment.*
 - The Livelihoods Advisor proposed for Mbandaka was not available upon receipt of the award. A second candidate was recruited and at time of writing, is currently awaiting approval from USAID. The Bukavu Livelihoods Advisor is to begin work in January 2006.

Recruitment and hiring of Local Staff (IRC and EDC)

1. *Identification and Hiring of local EDC Staff (all offices).*
 - *Kinshasa* – Recruitment for several of the Kinshasa positions required two rounds of posting and a broadening of advertising in the second round to identify qualified candidates. As a result, the Policy Advisor and Accountant positions have been filled and contracts issued. The shared SIEEQ-HOPE positions for Secretary and Logistics Assistant (Office Manager in original budget) were developed and agreed to, and staff will be on board in January. Recruitment for the IRI Advisor position identified two suitable candidates, and 12 IRI scriptwriters were successfully recruited to participate in the upcoming IRI workshop.
 - *Mbandaka* – Recruitment and identification of candidates for 5 EDC positions was successful (Sr. Training Advisor, Didactic Materials Specialist, Policy/M&E Specialist, Accountant, Administrative Assistant). Employee contracts have been signed. Two drivers and a Janitor will be hired in January and February once vehicles and office space is complete.
 - *Bukavu* – Final selection for 3 positions has been completed (Accountant, Sr. Training Advisor and Didactic Materials Specialist) and a third (Policy/M&E) was reposted as no suitable candidates were found. Employee contracts will be finalized in early January.
2. *Pre-recruitment of IRC Staff.* IRC consultant tested candidates for 13 positions in Mbandaka and Bukavu during the month of December, and is awaiting the finalized EDC-IRC Letter of Authorization in order to select and hire for these positions. The 13 positions are:

Bukavu:
Livelihoods Manager (1)
Grants Manager (1)
Capacity Building Officer (4)
Program Assistant (1)

Mbandaka:
Livelihoods Manager (1)
Grants Manager (1)
Capacity Building Officer (4)

EDC and IRC have provided reciprocal support to each other in the recruitment process, with IRC posting EDC job descriptions and collating CVs for review by EDC in Bukavu and EDC playing a similar role for IRC in Mbandaka.

Staff Orientation

Orientation for all staff. Originally scheduled for December 19-23, 2005, the orientation was rescheduled for January 16-20, 2006. The original date was set to take advantage of P-4 Methodology Specialist already scheduled to be in country. Due to the length of time required to recruit qualified personnel, the training was moved to January to ensure most staff are on board and able to attend training. This shift also allows for a complete All Staff Orientation guided by the COP that will cover planning of activities, roles and responsibilities in addition to the P-4 Methodology.

Procurement (see Workplan Sub-result: Project Operational on the Ground Activity i.)

1. *International procurement.* Two laptops were purchased and brought from the US for the COP and the Education Advisor.
2. *Local Procurement.* EDC engaged a local logistics consultant, Pape Seck, for a period of one month to assist in the gathering of estimates, comparison of these estimates and purchase of equipment. Estimates were gathered for office equipment, vehicles and motorcycles, generators and safes required to carry out the project.

Initial basic equipment procured by EDC includes a safe and basic office supplies for Kinshasa, and a printer and safe for Mbandaka. Upon availability of office space and transfer of project funds, the purchase of vehicles, motorcycles, and laptops will occur (in early January). Measures are being taken to accommodate the time required for vehicle procurement through the rental of vehicles in Kinshasa and Mbandaka.

Office Setup (see Workplan Sub-result: Project Operational on the Ground Activities j., l.)

Kinshasa, Mbandaka and Bukavu offices established.

- *Kinshasa* - EDC completed arrangements for renting portions of the office space currently occupied by EDC's SIEEQ project. The current occupant will vacate by January 20, 2005. A floor plan was developed and an agreement made between the SIEEQ and HOPE projects on the rental amount for the separate and shared space.
- *Mbandaka* - EDC and landowner signed lease and renovation agreement for the office space in Mbandaka. The space is scheduled to be available on

February 1, 2006 for occupation, assuming renovations take place as scheduled. In the interim, HOPE staff will use the conference area and some storage space of EDC SIEEQ office in Mbandaka.

- *Bukavu* – IRC arranged space in its existing office sufficient for HOPE staff on a temporary basis. Construction on the new building has begun. **The foundation is nearly** completed and work on the walls has already begun. The project has initiated the process for procurement of office furniture as well.

EDC-IRC Sub-Grant Agreement (see Workplan Sub-result: Project Operational on the Ground Activity e.)

Negotiation of sub-grant agreement between IRC and EDC. As a result of early conversations between EDC's Contracts Officer, Project Director and IRC Country Director, it was agreed that a Letter of Authorization would be drafted by EDC to IRC authorizing an initial disbursement of funds for activities through mid-2006, in the event that negotiation of the sub-grant agreement required significant time. EDC and IRC home offices are at the final stages of reviewing this Letter. IRC has proceeded with preparatory activities (see above and paragraph that follows) in anticipation of receipt of this Letter and subsequent negotiation of the sub-grant agreement.

School-Community Site Selection (see Workplan Sub-Result: Project Operation on the Ground Activity m.)

First year school communities' site selection. Pre-site selection has taken place to pre-determine priority locations for site selection in early 2006. IRC's consultant surveyed possible zones for HOPE to consider for site selection within the provinces of Sud Kivu and Mbandaka. This exercise helped to narrow down areas accessible within a 5-hour period, and that have demonstrated stability (lack of civil unrest). In Mbandaka, in addition to the pre-recruitment of staff, IRC's consultant reviewed the other humanitarian actors in the area, security, and the various logistics resources. He pre-identified three residence options for the IRC Livelihoods Advisor to be finalized upon his arrival in January.

USAID Result One: Access to Education Increased, Particularly for the Most Vulnerable Children
--

Sub-Result 1: Increased participation of vulnerable groups in education

1.1.a Integrate and adapt P4 and MRC methodologies into a single series of trainings for HOPE Project.

The P4 and MRC methodologies will be integrated as part of the all staff orientation (to take place January 16-20, 2006). The COP, in consultation with P4 consultant and IRC staff, are elaborating an outline of objectives and products for this orientation.

USAID Result Two: School Fees Costs Borne By Parents Decreased Through Alternative Financing Mechanisms

Activities related to this result will commence in January 2006.

USAID Result Three: Quality of Education Increased through Innovative Educational and Income Generating Activities

Sub-Result 1: IRI program providing instruction and support to hard to reach schools and communities is used on a regular basis

3.1.a. IRI Scriptwriter Training Workshop.

Scriptwriter participants have been identified and consultants have begun preliminary arrangements. The workshop is scheduled to take place in late January.

3.1.g. Initial Recording of Programs for Formative Evaluation.

EDC conducted an assessment of equipment procurement options for the setup of the IRI audio production studio. Issues of space, equipment availability and the identification of qualified staff to run a state of the art studio arose. As a result, EDC investigated the possibility of hiring a local production studio to perform the work. EDC met with members of the Ministry of Education, the national television and radio station, as well as with the owners of the Vision Arts Culture studio. Vision Arts Culture offers a state of the art analog and digital setup, complete with highly experienced, creative staff and a network of musicians and actors who could assist in development of the IRI programs. EDC is currently in negotiations with Vision Arts Culture for rental of this studio in 2006 and 2007.

Sub-Result 2: Inspectors and teachers trained and practicing active teaching methods in primary school grades 1-4

In collaboration with the Cooperation Technique Belge, EDC met with the head of the Didactic Materials Division of the Ministry of Education, who has donated 720 copies of the National Curriculum and 720 copies of the teacher's guide to the national curriculum to HOPE. This gesture will ensure that all teachers, supervisors and administrators participating in HOPE trainings will have their own copy of the guides, as in many cases distribution efforts by the MoE have not been able to reach all schools in a given province.

USAID Result Four: Policy Changes on School Fees at the Local and National Levels

A policy advisor was recruited and hired. Policy activities will begin in the coming quarter.

3. Communications

HOPE has developed a fact sheet in English and French that is downloadable via the web at http://ies.edc.org/projects/DRC_HOPE.htm. Stephanie Foerster also met with Eric Mukoka, USAID Public Information Representative to discuss communications needs and methods of dissemination in relation to HOPE. In addition, in October, the Mbandaka arm of Radio Okapi interviewed EDC staff members about the project. This interview, which provided an overview of HOPE's principal activities, was broadcast three times in Mbandaka and was also broadcast nationwide.

4. M&E

In November Project Director Helen Boyle met with Africa Bureau representatives to discuss proposed indicators for the Monitoring and Evaluation plan. The final draft plan was developed by EDC and IRC and submitted to USAID.