

EQUIPE: Equity and quality in primary education

Final report

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Table of contents

| | |
|---|----|
| 1. Introduction..... | 3 |
| Background..... | 3 |
| Program Objectives..... | 3 |
| 2. Program Activities and Deliverables | 5 |
| 3. Successes and Challenges | 26 |
| Key successes..... | 26 |
| Producing Quality Products in a Complex Political Environment | 26 |
| Linking Project Interventions for Maximized Impact | 26 |
| Promoting Transparency in Grants Selection and Management..... | 27 |
| Creating a Foundation for Improved Education Management | 28 |
| Challenges..... | 28 |
| Insufficient resources and incentives in the ministry..... | 29 |
| The future of the National Girls’ Network for the Promotion of Girls’ Education (NNPGE)..... | 30 |
| Contract administration..... | 31 |
| 4. Conclusions..... | 32 |
| Annex 1. CARE Final Report..... | 33 |
| Annex 2. EMI SYSTEMS Final Report | 65 |
| Annex 3. List of Contract Modifications | 74 |

1. Introduction

Background

In 2003 Benin remained a poor country with an illiteracy rate between 60 and 70 percent. A key challenge to Benin's economic and social development is ensuring that the entire school-age population completes six years of primary education. Despite progress in gross enrollment rates in the past decade, serious differences remain between enrollment rates for boys and girls, urban and rural children. Addressing these differences is essential if Benin is to achieve Universal Primary Enrollment (UPE) by 2015 and advance as a nation with improved economic and social prosperity. The lack of qualified teachers is a significant weakness in the primary education system. Reliable data for rational and effective management of the teaching force, in particular, and of the education system, in general, are not always available. Teacher strikes have reduced the amount of time spent in class for every school year, except that of 2003-2004, since Benin's Ministry of Education began introducing the New Study Program (NPE) in 1999. As a result of these ongoing teacher strikes, over 90 percent of the student population have fallen behind in learning the new curriculum. The resulting delays have weakened the extent to which the Ministry has been able to demonstrate the effectiveness of the NPE and make a difference in improving the basic education attainment of Beninese children, particularly girls, and has tarnished the public view of the Ministry's commitment to UPE, equity, more transparent, accountable policies and positive change. On a positive note, the support of USAID and other organizations in the domain of improved gender equity at the primary school level has had the result of decreasing the gender gap (the number of percentage points between the Gross Enrollment Rate of boys and that of girls) from 32 points in 2001-2002 to 24 points in 2003-2004.

Program Objectives

To support the Government of Benin in addressing these challenges, USAID/Benin's Strategic Objective for education seeks to ensure that *"More Children Receive a Quality Basic Education on an Equitable Basis."* To achieve this objective, USAID/Benin awarded Creative Associates International, Inc. (CAII) a three-year contract on February 4, 2003 to implement and manage the Equity and Quality in Primary Education (EQUIPE) project. Creative Associates International, in partnership with CARE International and EMI Systems, aimed to improve equity and quality by increasing decentralization and community participation in Benin's primary education system with an integrated strategy that revolves around capacity-building for context-appropriate, sustainable reform. Specific EQUIPE components included strengthened pedagogy, more effective curricula and Textbooks, improved environments for girls' and HIV/AIDS education, as well as more effective, decentralized education management.

EQUIPE has supported the achievement of USAID/Benin's Strategic Objective in education to ensure that *"More Children Receive a Quality Basic Education on an Equitable Basis."* Four sets of results contributed to achievement of this Objective to strengthen the Government of Benin's Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education

capacities and partnerships with decentralized entities to manage better quality, more equitable education. Each of these four result areas corresponds to a Project EQUIPE Component:

- Improved Pedagogical System;
- Increased Girls' Enrollment in target areas;
- Improved Environment for Stakeholders;
- Improved Education System Management in Decentralization Context.

In addition to these four result areas is the fifth component of Project EQUIPE intervention: HIV/AIDS and the Education Sector.

2. Deliverables, Program Activities and Results

The table below presents a detailed description of deliverables and related project activities and results.

| <i>Deliverable number</i> | <i>Completion date</i> | <i>Activities and Results Planned</i> | <i>Activities and Results Achieved</i> |
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| <p>CLIN 1 IMPROVED PEDAGOGICAL SYSTEM <i>IR 1: Improved Pedagogical System</i></p> | | | |
| <p>Sub – IR 1.1 Appropriate curriculum developed and in use <i>(Refer to Contract Sections C.5.1.1-1 and C.5.1.2-1)</i></p> | | | |
| 1 | 6/30/05 | Consistency and coherence of the different documents and methods developed and utilized to implement the NPE is verified. | This report was prepared by a consultant from the Belgian consulting group BIEF, who provided a very thorough evaluation of the New Study Program (NPE) and met with various stakeholders to share the results of his study. This report was later synthesized to provide decision-makers amongst the donor community with necessary information regarding the NPE. |
| 2 | 12/7/05 | MEPS capacity is improved to be able to perform the key functions related to implementing, managing, and sustaining the NPE. These include preparing and revising curriculum materials, reproducing learning materials, training teachers and other staff, and evaluating student learning. | This report was prepared by two highly experienced Beninese consultants, who met with actors at every level of the education system and exploited a large volume of documentation to produce a thorough evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of the Ministry with regard to management of the NPE. This report will be useful to both the Ministry and USAID in planning future interventions within the system. |
| 3 | 7/30/03 | Print-ready CM2 curriculum delivered on CD-Rom to USAID. | This last level of the primary curriculum was prepared by Beninese educational experts from various levels of the |

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| | | | <p>system (School Inspectors, Directors, Teachers and Ministry technicians) who have been working on and learning from the curriculum development process over the past decade designing the set of competencies that will form the basis of learning in the six subject areas. It should be noted here that due to the series of teachers' strikes from 1999-2003, a "special curriculum" was put in place for a period of three years starting October 2003, with the goal of enabling children to "catch up" on the curricular knowledge that they had missed out on due to the absence of their teachers for extended periods of time.</p> |
| 4 | 9/30/03 revised 12/26/03 | Plan to implement recommendations from first pedagogical evaluation | <p>This plan, compiled by high-level MEPS officials, was revised following a USAID request for improvements. The pedagogical evaluation of Grades 1 & 2, undertaken by Louis Berger/Devtech, had taken place in February-April 2003 and had provided recommendations for improvement at various levels of the system so that the low level of student acquisition (especially in French) could be strengthened.</p> |
| 7 | 6/30/04 | Progress report concerning implementation of the recommendations from the first pedagogical evaluation submitted to USAID CTO. | <p>Production of this progress report involved working closely with Ministry officials from various divisions in order to study closely the activities that had been undertaken in fulfillment of the Plan (see deliverable 4.)</p> |
| 9 | 12/30/04 | CCGNPE communications strategy | <p>This strategy was undertaken in several phases, during which EQUIPE assisted the Ministry with an initial consultant's evaluation and proposals for a communications strategy, followed by activity in the field entirely organized by the CCGNPE, followed by the synthesis of the various activities by a well-known Beninese media personality into a communications strategy and policy proposals. The purpose of the strategy is to improve knowledge and perception of the New Study Program (NPE) amongst</p> |

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| | | | education stakeholders (teachers and parents) as well as the public at large in a context where the NPE has been under attack by those seeking to make it the scapegoat for any and all education problems in Benin. |
| 10 | 1/31/06 | Progress report concerning implementation of communications strategy | Finalization of this report was delayed by other priorities of the Pedagogy team as well as a lack of progress at the Ministry level with regard to the communications strategy. Communication has been recognized as one of the main weaknesses of the Ministry's implementation of the New Study Program, but it appears that there is little political will to adopt a viable long term strategy. |
| 11 | 7/28/05 | Draft concept of "Basic Education" and implementation policy | This document, prepared by a highly respected Beninese consultant, provides an overall understanding of the manner in which the term "Basic Education" is viewed in Benin, with implications regarding how various education programs are implemented. |
| 12 | 11/17/04 | Actions implemented to strengthen the Document Network (Réseau Documentaire) | This report was prepared by EQUIPE's pedagogy team. The constitution of Benin's Document Network was a well-meaning effort in building up resources for use by educators throughout the country. It was not well organized and has not been sustainable over the life of the Education Reform. |
| | 10/12/05 | Revised Grades 1-2 Curriculum | Although this is not a contract deliverable, members of the EQUIPE Pedagogy Team were involved with the activities surrounding production of this revised curriculum. This curricular document was elaborated in response to recommendations made in the 2003 Evaluation of Grades 1&2 conducted by Louis Berger/Devtech. Dr. Xavier Roegiers, an international expert in competency-based learning, participated in the finalization and validation of this document in September 2005. The long-term health of |

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| | | | Benin's Education Reform will require that the curricula for all grades be revised in keeping with the principles found in this document. |
| Sub – IR 1.2 Appropriate Textbooks developed and in use <i>(Refer to Contract Sections C.5.1.1-2 and C.5.1.2-2)</i> | | | |
| 13 | 11/05/03 | 100,000 French textbooks and 100,000 math textbooks reproduced for CM1 and delivered to MEPS. | In the face of many challenges related to the break in USAID assistance to the Ministry before the beginning of EQUIPE activities, these textbooks were delivered to the MEPS during the first month of the 2003-2004 academic year. Final delivery of books was somewhat late due to accumulated delays in the process of textbook conceptualization as well as one of the printers not keeping to schedule. |
| 14 | 8/26/04 | 90,000 French textbooks and 90,000 math textbooks reproduced for CM2 and delivered to MEPS. Confirmation of delivery submitted to USAID CTO. | High quality CM2 textbooks were produced before the target delivery date, allowing USAID to proceed with a highly publicized handover of the books to the Minister, which in turn enabled her to quash some rumors that textbooks for the crucial Grade 6 year would not be delivered on time. |
| 15 | 9/17/03 | 60,000 teachers' guides reproduced for CM1 and delivered to MEPS. Confirmation of delivery submitted to USAID CTO. | These guides were completed as planned and made available to the teacher training centers in ample time for the training sessions, although there had been some delays in the production of the Mathematics teachers' guides. |
| 16 | 8/19/04 | 50,000 teachers' guides reproduced for CM2 and delivered to MEPS. Confirmation of delivery submitted to USAID CTO | These guides were produced in a timely manner and distributed to the training centers throughout the country in time for the training sessions, which ran from August 30 – September 24, 2004. |
| 17 | 3/30/04 | Draft textbook policy submitted to USAID CTO. | This policy, which is the logical outcome of policies in place since the beginning of the Educational Reform, encourages national production and sale of textbooks for reasons of sustainability. It was designed and validated by cadre of the Ministry of Culture AND the Ministry of |

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| | | | Primary and Secondary Education. During discussions with the World Bank in 2004, the policy came under scrutiny, since the World Bank was proposing to supply on a one-time basis all the textbooks necessary to provide a one student-one textbook ratio. |
| 18 | 10/15/04 | Plan to implement textbook policy submitted to USAID CTO. | The plan focuses on three points: production, distribution and management/stock renewal of textbooks for all subjects, grade levels and locations in the country. The ceding of copyright to national publishers, the formation of Textbook Management Committees at every level of the system (down to the school), and the monitoring of the system are included in the plan. |
| 19 | 6/30/05 | Progress report on implementation of textbook policy | This progress report was completed as planned. It was encouraging to note that most of the activities found in the textbook policy implementation plan had been accomplished, at least superficially (the new textbook committees will take several years to really become functional.) An initial set of textbooks for French and Math (1 set for every two students) was thus made available to the system as the grade by grade roll-out of the NPE generalization took place from 1999-2005, with those textbooks available for sale starting the following year (except for Grade 6 textbooks, which were made available for sale the same year as the free school distribution took place.) However, the distribution system presented many flaws, with the result that a significant number of schools did not receive books, and the availability of the books for sale varied dramatically throughout the country. |
| 20 | 12/19/03 | First report on DPU capacity submitted to USAID CTO. | This report pointed out several problems with the DPU that were to hinder its progress throughout the life of EQUIPE. The INFRE's Desktop Publishing Unit (DPU) is an integral part of Benin's national capacity for textbook production. |

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| | | | Early on in the project it was evident that the material situation and morale of the DPU would be insufficient for their full autonomy. |
| 21 | 7/29/05 revised 10/14/05 | Second report on DPU capacity submitted to USAID CTO. | This report, following on the initial one (see deliverable 20) concluded that, although there had been some progress noted in the DPU's capacity to produce simple educational materials, it is unlikely that this Unit will be able to fulfill the role of technical leader with regard to textbook production which was envisioned at its creation. |
| Sub – IR 1.3 Appropriate teacher training system developed and in use. <i>(Refer to Contract Sections C.5.1.1-3 and C.5.1.2-3)</i> | | | |
| 22 | 5/21/04 | CM1 teachers and other staff trained and report submitted to USAID CTO. | This training session had very high visibility nationally, due to the negative attention focused on the educational system and the NPE. The customary strategy of holding a four-week teacher training session (for CM1, with two weeks of refresher training for CE2) during the summer vacation of 2003 was unworkable due to the unsettled nature of the previous academic year, during which public school students were not in class during six of the nine months due to teacher strikes. In order to ensure that teachers did receive training, a strategy of mixing training sessions (3 days per week) with in-class practice (2 days per week) was conducted from October through December. Though there were some practical advantages possible through this strategy, which allowed teachers to directly apply their training to real classroom situations, overall this strategy was disruptive of student learning during the period concerned. |
| 23 | 12/30/04 | CM2 teachers and other staff trained and report submitted to USAID CTO. | The 2004 teacher training was one of the unsung successes of the NPE, with training sessions taking place on time and smoothly from August 30 – September 24, 2004 (4 weeks for the CM2 teachers) and August 30 – September 10, 2004 |

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| | | | (2 weeks for the CM1 teachers). Lessons learned from the previous years' training sessions provided for a training strategy more focused on practical classroom planning and activities. |
| 25 | 6/20/05 revised 1/31/06 | Annual orientation for secondary school teachers conducted and report submitted to USAID CTO. | This orientation session, which had not taken place during the 2003-2004 academic year, was geared toward introducing secondary teachers to the methodologies used in the NPE, so that they can be better prepared to teach those students who have been taught using competency-based methods. 220 Pedagogic Counselors were first of all trained for five days in January 2005, following which 646 teachers in 70 experimental secondary schools (those receiving students from the primary schools that had begun experimenting the NPE before the beginning of its generalization) were trained for three days. |
| 26 | 12/7/05 | Complete set of training materials and procedures prepared for new teachers, all grades. Copies submitted to USAID CTO. | These materials (2 tomes totaling 350 pages), created by experienced Beninese teachers, inspectors, teacher trainers and curriculum development experts, fill an important gap in the educational system – that of basic initial training for teachers who have received no formal training. With community teachers playing an ever larger role staffing both urban and rural schools, and with no formal mechanism in place to train these teachers, such materials can be used by the Ministry or by NGOs to provide basic pedagogical concepts to otherwise untrained teachers. |
| 27 | 12/22/05 | In-service materials developed for RUP system. Copies submitted to USAID CTO. | These materials (2 tomes totaling 320 pages) were developed by the same team that created the training materials of Deliverable 26 and designed to be complementary to those materials. Their purpose is to provide the Pedagogical Units with a standardized set of training materials that cover most the basic questions usually met in the classroom. |

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| 28 | 10/12/05 | Pre-service materials prepared for teacher training centers. Copies submitted to USAID CTO | This 268-page manual was elaborated by the MEPS Commission for the Re-opening of Teacher Training Colleges, of which EQUIPE staff are integral members. It will serve as the basic training document used in the newly opened (January 2006) Teacher Training Colleges. |
| Sub – IR 1.4 Appropriate learning assessment of students developed and in use. (Refer to Contract Sections C.5.1.1-4 and C.5.1.2-4) | | | |
| 30 | 2/10/06 | Learning assessment instruments and procedures finalized for all grades. Copies delivered to USAID CTO. | This comprehensive set of learning assessment instruments (2 Tomes totaling 370 pages) provides procedures and example test questions for all six grades in all six subject areas. |
| 31 | 8/23/05 | Appropriate MEPS personnel trained concerning learning assessment system. Report submitted to USAID CTO | A series of preparation and training sessions was held for MEPS personnel to enable them to better master the concept and practice of assessment using competency-based teaching and learning methods. The highlight of this activity was the six-day training session led by Dr. Xavier Roegiers, international authority in this domain, in June 2005. |
| 32 | 3/3/06 | Policy proposals to reduce grade repetition and dropout prepared and submitted to USAID CTO | Grade repetition and dropout are primary factors of inefficiency within the educational system, and the Beninese government is seeking to remedy these systemic problems in order to meet the goal of Education for All (witness the 2004 Ministerial decree requiring that all first grade students pass to second grade). The proposals found in this document come from a study of the international and national situation of grade repetition and dropout and will hopefully be helpful to the Ministry. |
| CLIN 2 INCREASED GIRLS' ENROLLMENT IN TARGET AREAS <i>IR 2: Increased Girls' Enrollment In Target Areas</i> | | | |

Sub – IR 2.1 Equity in the classroom improved *(Refer to Contract Sections C.5.2.1-1 and C.5.2.2-1)*

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| 33 | 9/25/03 | EIC materials to train teachers and directors submitted to USAID CTO. | Bringing together key actors in girls’ education from the Ministry and NGO community, a five-module/user’s guide set of materials were prepared for training teachers, school directors, parents and civil society actors in “Equity at School and in the Community”. An international consultant with considerable experience in Benin as well as with Creative’s “Equity in the Classroom” worked with the Beninese team to finalize these materials. The materials were validated by the Ministry, and instructions communicated by the Director of Primary Education that these materials should be used in Pedagogical Unit training sessions. |
| 34 | 11/14/03 | MEPS and NNPGE personnel trained to use EIC methods and to monitor its use. Report submitted to USAID CTO. | Ministry and NGO personnel specializing in girls’ education were trained in the use of the five modules and their accompanying user’s guides (Del. 33). It is important to note that these materials extend the training in gender equity issues outside of the school to parents and the community. |
| 35 | 6/30/04 | Policy to recruit and retain more female teachers submitted to USAID CTO | Following several months of field research by the Girls’ Education team and interviews with a wide spectrum of actors, a policy document was elaborated with Ministry officials and presented to civil society actors (NGOs, Parent Associations, religious leaders, union members) as well as government actors from various Ministries for study. The policy document was validated in June 2004 and its contents integrated into MEPS planning, including the Ten-Year Plan. |
| 36 | 6/30/05 | Policy proposals to reduce girls’ repetition rates, especially between CE2 and CM2 submitted to USAID CTO | Combining field research with follow-up activities related to Girls’ Education and Life Skills training, a wide spectrum of actors including education officials, teachers, |

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| | | | students, parents and local opinion leaders were interviewed regarding the causes and potential solutions to repetition between the crucial classes of CE2 and CM2, as well as the dropout that often follows repetition. National statistics were also examined for regional and grade-level trends. Following a June 15, 2005 meeting between USAID, the MEPS, and EQUIPE, all parties agreed that EQUIPE would henceforth provide policy proposals instead of policies, which explains the difference in language between deliverable 36 and 35. |
| Sub – IR 2.2 Socio-cultural environment for girls' education improved <i>(Refer to Contract Sections C.5.2.1-2 and C.5.2.2-2)</i> | | | |
| 37 | 6/30/03 | Plan to implement NNPGE evaluation recommendations submitted to USAID CTO. | And evaluation of the National Network for the Promotion of Girls' Education had been conducted in early 2003, and the recommendations issuing there from were used as the basis for a plan whose main focus was the transformation of the NNPGE's status to an NGO from that of a Ministry-sponsored organization. The activities in this plan provided the structure for NNPGE operations over the life of EQUIPE. |
| 38 | 6/30/04 revised 12/30/04 | NNPGE plan implemented and report submitted to USAID CTO. | Implementation of the NNPGE plan encountered several obstacles, the most resistant of which was the unwillingness of the Ministry to take the final actions necessary for transforming the status of the NNPGE to that of an NGO. The other activities of the plan were implemented satisfactorily, but to the end of EQUIPE the status of the NNPGE remained unchanged. |
| 39 | 6/30/04 | Assessment of CARE, World Learning and other relevant programs completed and report submitted to USAID CTO. | A variety of experiences with the goal of increasing girls' education rates, especially in resistant rural areas, had been experimented in Benin since the late 1990s. This report researched a good number of these experiences and evaluated their lessons learned to propose some of the most |

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| | | | successful of the strategies. The document proposals were used as a basis for activities sponsored by the NNPGE in 19 communities with the lowest rates of girls' education. |
| 40 | 6/30/05 | Proposals for a National Girls' Education Policy submitted to USAID CTO | Combining field research with monitoring missions to the 19 'red zone' communes (those with the lowest rates of girls' education nationally), and using documents produced since the mid-90s regarding girls' education in Benin, information was gathered and studied with various Ministries as well as NGO and civil society representatives during a workshop in April 2005. Following the June 15, 2005 meeting described in Deliverable 36, the policy proposals that were the fruit of NNPGE research and the April workshop were submitted to the Ministry for use in the elaboration of the National Girls' Education Policy. UNICEF and DANIDA sponsored two consultants to assist the Ministry in preparing the final policy document, and the EQUIPE and NNPGE teams participated in several sets of workshops held to examine the consultants' proposals. As of the end of EQUIPE, the National Girls' Education Policy had not been validated. |
| CLIN 3 IMPROVED ENVIRONMENT FOR STAKEHOLDERS <i>IR 3: Improved Environment for Stakeholders</i> | | | |
| Sub – IR 3.2 Increased involvement of decentralized collectives in school financing and management <i>(Refer to Contract Sections C.5.3.1 and C.5.3. 2)</i> | | | |
| 41 | 12/30/03 | Working groups established at commune level in four departments. Status report submitted to USAID CTO. | Following instructions from USAID regarding the four departments in which activities should take place, and in consultation with USAID's Decentralization and Governance Team as well as with EQUIPE's Girls' Education Team, a selection workshop was conducted with Ministry representatives to decide on how to select the 20 |

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| | | | <p>communes in which Working Groups would be set up. All communes of the four departments applied, and selection (once again with USAID and the Ministry) was done based on performance possibility criteria. Once selected, the Improved Environment for Stakeholders Team conducted initial visits for selecting Working Group members and then training sessions to provide the tools and orientation for the tasks of these groups.</p> |
| 42 | 5/28/04 | <p>Education plans and budgets prepared in at least 15 communes. Status report submitted to USAID CTO.</p> | <p>After presenting the overall tasks to the 20 groups in department-level meetings, the Improved Environment for Stakeholders Team worked with each of the 20 Working Groups to produce a plan and budget for supporting Education activities in the communes, based on a study of each commune specific situation. This was the first time some of these groups had collaborated with each other – representative from the Mayor’s office, the Inspector head of the school district, parent associations, women’s groups, youth groups and merchant groups. Many of these plans were integrated into the overall Communal Development Plan, which is an important instrument of decentralized management.</p> |
| <p>Sub – IR 3.4 Improved policy environment for civil participation in education (Refer to Contract Sections C.5.3.1 and C.5.3.2)</p> | | | |
| 43 | 6/30/04 | <p>Plan to encourage increased private sector & civil society participation in providing education services prepared and submitted to USAID CTO.</p> | <p>The Improved Environment for Stakeholders Team encouraged the 20 Working Groups to explore ways in which the private sector (merchants groups and agricultural cooperatives) as well as civil society (associations of parents, women and youth as well as teachers’ unions) could become more constructively involved in the education sector. This is a new concept in Benin, and the proposals were a mixture of timidity and excess ambition. But in areas where there are active private sector groups (cotton, for the most part), there are signs of increasing civil</p> |

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| | | | responsibility. |
| 44 | 6/30/05 | Incentives implemented and assessed. Report submitted to USAID CTO | Following the proposals for the plans found in deliverable 43, the Improved Environment for Stakeholders Team monitored the plan implementation in each of the 20 Working Groups using evaluation instruments and assessed the activities undertaken for accomplishing these plans. Matching grants of \$10,000 had been made available to each of the Working Groups in order to provide models of collaboration amongst the various groups. Construction activities (mostly school buildings and student desks) were successfully conducted in thirteen of the twenty Working Groups. |
| CLIN 4 IMPROVED MANAGEMENT OF THE EDUCATION SYSTEM IN THE CONTEXT OF DECENTRALIZATION <i>IR 4: Improved Management of The Education System in the Context of Decentralization</i> | | | |
| Sub – IR 4.1 Appropriate planning and monitoring tools developed and used <i>(Refer to Contract Sections C.5.4.1-1 and C.5.4.2-1)</i> | | | |
| 45 | 12/30/03 | Sector policies, plans and budgets prepared at national level. Copy of Education for All National Plan submitted to USAID CTO. | By 2003, the Ministry had a team working on the Education for All National Plan. EQUIPE provided two experienced Beninese education specialists as consultants to assist in finalizing this plan, which was presented to all three Ministries having education responsibilities for revision. The final version was validated in December 2003 in a highly visible workshop and official ceremony involving a wide spectrum of high level actors in Benin. The various components of this plan were integrated into Benin's Ten-Year Plan for the Education Sector. |
| 46 | 7/30/04 | Sector policies, plans and budgets prepared at departmental level. Copy of Education for All Departmental Plan submitted to USAID CTO | It was not considered feasible or useful for each of Benin's twelve departments to construct a departmental-level plan similar to the National Education for All Plan. Rather, one of the consultants who had assisting in elaborating the |

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| | | | national plan proposed planning tools by which each of the decentralized levels, starting with the communes and then moving to the departments, could use the National EFA Plan to identify action areas for its particular needs. These proposals have not been widely disseminated or put into action, given the integration of the National EFA Plan into the overall Ten-Year Plan, which has not yet been finalized. |
| 47 | 10/31/05 | Improved Educational Development Plans produced in 2 communes through use of strategic and methodological frameworks. Copies submitted to USAID CTO. | This activity was in fact a combined effort between CLINs 3 and 4 to use the tools developed by CLIN 4 (EFA Plan, MapDecision and the C/CS Budgeting tool) to improve the plans and budgets produced by two of CLIN 3's twenty Working Groups. Five members of each of the two Working Groups were trained in the use of the tools mentioned above, and then their plans and budgets (see Deliverable 42) were revised using the tools. The revised tools were presented to the greater Working Groups and their respective Mayor's offices, and all actors agreed that using more scientific tools enabled them to make better informed and more realistic strategic plans. |
| 48 | 7/30/03 | UPE committee has plan and is operational. Progress report submitted to USAID CTO. | As described in Deliverable 45, the Ministry had established an Education for All/Universal Primary Education committee within its Planning and Prospective Division (DPP) by 2003. This report describes the various activities that the committee had undertaken by July 2003 and its plans for future activities. |
| 49 | 12/30/03 | Annual report of education statistics produced at national and department levels. Copies of reports submitted to USAID CTO. | Working closely with the Statistical Service (SSGI) of the DPP, the 2002-2003 Statistical Yearbook was submitted, using the DPP's existing software and procedures. Given that teachers were striking for six of the nine months of the academic year, data collection had been even more difficult than usual and there were many holes in the data. |

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| 50 | 12/29/04 | Annual report of education statistics produced at national and department levels. Copies of reports submitted to USAID CTO. | Continuing its close relationship with the Ministry's Statistical Service, EQUIPE worked with the decentralized as well as Ministerial actors to produce the 2003-2004 Statistical Yearbook. On the request of the DPP, the MapDecision software program designed by subcontractor EMI Systems was upgraded to include the function of producing the Statistical Yearbook automatically (instead of requiring several weeks worth of manually putting the information together for the various departments.) |
| 51 | 3/1/06 | Annual report of education statistics produced at national and department levels. Copies of reports submitted to USAID CTO. | A new system for data collection and entry at the circumscription and departmental levels was proposed for the 2004-2005 Statistical Yearbook. Unfortunately, due to teachers' strikes for the first three months of the academic year, the system could not be undertaken until March 2005 (instead of November 2004), and even then the proposed methodology was not followed with the same degree of rigor in the various departments. A new data collection instrument had been designed before the data collection process began, to take into consideration new variables that had been brought into play by FQL and textbook distribution factors. This instrument required the development of an updated version of the software to process the data. In the process of updating this software, the consultant included the capacity to automatically produce the Statistical Yearbook. Since the new collection instrument and software had unfortunately rendered the MapDecision tool incapable of producing the automatic version of the yearbook, the consultant's additional programming will allow the SSGI, once and for all, to dispense with the costly and time-consuming manual process for compiling the Yearbook. |
| 52 | 12/17/04 | Pilot School map of one school district with FQL | Integrated into the planning, analysis and monitoring tool |

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| | | data prepared and submitted to USAID CTO | MapDecision, subcontractor EMI Systems developed a pilot school map in one school district (CS Natitingou), using detailed MEPS data from the 2001-2002 and 2002-2004 academic years and location information on the primary schools. In April 2004, this information was shared with education officials of this school district and its department (Atacora). The participants in this workshop expressed great enthusiasm and took the opportunity to explore specific problems with the aid of the tool. (see Success Stories) |
| Sub – IR 4.2 Improved Financial Management (Refer to Contract Sections C.5.4.1-2 & C.5.4.2-2) | | | |
| 53 | 12/26/03 | Evaluation of actual procedures | During the first field trip of the EMI Systems consultants, a study of the current situation regarding Financial Management within the MEPS was undertaken, with a focus on the divisions of Financial Resources (DRF), Human Resources (DRH) and Planning and Prospective (DPP). This evaluation served as the foundation for successive activities. |
| 54 | 6/30/04 | Improved procedures proposed to increase utilization of investment budget. Report submitted to USAID CTO. | Based on the findings of the Deliverable 53 report, proposals were made for improving several financial management aspects of the MEPS, specifically with a view to increasing the efficient utilization of the investment budget. |
| 55 | 12/30/04 | Capacity improved to implement plans and budgets at central and department levels. Report submitted to USAID CTO | Building on the previous activities for improving planning and budgeting, subcontractor EMI Systems provided in this report practical tools (a school district budgeting instrument) as well as an evaluation of the progress made in improving central and departmental level planning activities. |
| 56 | 12/22/05 | Implementation of improved procedures. Report submitted to USAID CTO. | This report is an evaluation of the implementation of various proposals that had been made through previous |

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| | | | reports and integrated into MEPS planning and budgeting procedures through Ministerial decrees, internal reorganization of several departments, and creation of offices to improve transparency in financial planning and spending. The findings of this report were quite encouraging, to a large extent due to the hard work and collaborative functioning of the DRF under the new Director for Financial Resources. |
| Sub – IR 4.3 Improved Administration (Refer to Contract Sections C.5.4.1-3 and C.5.4.2-3) | | | |
| 57 | 3/30/04 | MEPS institutional analysis conducted. Report submitted to USAID CTO. | While Deliverable 53 concentrated on the financial aspects of MEPS management, a similar analysis was undertaken with regard to overall administration, particularly in light of reorganization for improved decentralization of the system. By the date of the report, several of the recommendations suggested by EMI Systems to the Ministry had already been adopted. |
| 58 | 12/29/04 | MEPS decentralization policy and plan submitted to USAID CTO. | In collaboration with Ministry officials involved in the decentralization process, the combined EMI Systems/EQUIPE team prepared a policy and plan for decentralization of MEPS structures and activities. During the validation of this plan in March 2005, it was found that many of the early suggestions had already been incorporated into the evolving Ministry structure. The challenge is to translate the policy and planning aspects into reality on the ground. |
| CLIN 5 HIV/AIDS AND THE EDUCATION SECTOR | | | |
| Emphasis Area 1: Building MEPS Capacity: (Refer to Contract Sections C.5.5.1-1 and C.5.5.2-1) | | | |

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| 59 | 6/30/04 | Study concerning HIV/AIDS and the education sector. Report submitted to USAID CTO. | Two studies were in fact conducted in fulfillment of this deliverable – the first one a baseline document to assist with the elaboration of the Life Skills strategy: “Study on Community Practices with Regard to Sexuality and HIV/AIDS, and Related Pedagogically Appropriate Terminology”, and the second the main study conducted to assist the MEPS: “Study of the Impact of HIV/AIDS on Primary Education in Benin.” |
| 60 | 9/25/03 | MEPS HIV/AIDS management unit established. Report submitted to USAID CTO. | This initial report, submitted in September 2003, was helpful in pointing out to the MEPS that the existing structure of the <i>Unité Focale de Lutte contre les IST et le VIH/SIDA</i> (UFLS) was not functional. This resulted in a correction of the structure of the UFLS through Ministerial decree on April 5, 2004, designating a more manageable number of actors and placing the UFLS under the supervision of the newly-created ministerial division for the Promotion of Education (DPS). |
| 61 | 6/30/04 | Policy dialogue established. Report submitted to USAID CTO. | Working with a reduced Ministry-designated staff of two UFLS members (Coordinator and Finance Manager), the EQUIPE HIV/AIDS Team Leader was able to conduct meetings in various departments to open dialogue with civil society actors regarding HIV/AIDS and the role that the UFLS was to play in assisting the Education sector to deal with the problems associated with HIV/AIDS in the near and long term future. |
| 62 | 12/29/04 | Strategic plan and work plans prepared and submitted to USAID CTO. | Despite the fact that the full cohort of UFLS members was not named until December 6, 2004, a series of workshops was held with Ministry-designated actors and civil society leaders from October to December 2004 to design a strategic plan for the UFLS (2005-2009), as well as two work plans (for 2005 and for the first quarter of 2005). |

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| | | | These plans were validated at a final seminar gathering Ministry decision makers and HIV/AIDS experts on December 14-15, 2004. |
| Emphasis Area 2: Life Skills Education (Refer to Contract Sections C.5.5.1-2 and C.5.5.2-2) | | | |
| 63 | 6/30/04 revised 12/30/04 | Life skills curriculum prepared and tested. Report submitted to USAID CTO. | With a help of one international Life Skills expert and one locally-recruited Pedagogy expert, the overall strategy of Life Skills (<i>Compétences de Vie Courante – CVC</i>) in the context of Benin was defined, and the structure of a Life Skills curriculum developed. Given the competency-based approach of the New Study Program, which provides a place already for virtually all of the Life Skills competencies within the transversal and trans-disciplinary competencies, it was perceived that the Life Skills curriculum would best serve the education system if it were integrated into the existing primary curriculum. The curriculum proposed therefore highlights existing curricular areas (level by level) where Life Skills can be incorporated, and provides guidance for the types of topics and activities that can be undertaken to reinforce the teaching of the Life Skills competencies. Training of 275 school district heads, directors, teachers, parents, and local NGOs from the 19 ‘red zone’ communes was conducted in December 2004, and the training received transferred to teachers in 90 schools from January-March 2005. |
| 64 | 7/30/04 revised 12/30/04 | Teacher training materials prepared and tested. Report submitted to USAID CTO. | The teacher training materials were designed to accompany the Life Skills curriculum. A manual containing copies of existing materials available within the educational system (developed by UNICEF and USAID) as well as references to textbook and teachers’ guide page numbers where additional information is providing, referring back to the Life Skills curriculum to indicate where the materials can |

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| | | | best reinforce each of the Life Skills competencies identified. These materials were also used in the training sessions described above (Deliverable 65.) |
| 65 | 12/30/04 | Strategy and policy for teachers prepared and submitted to USAID CTO. | One of the challenges facing the Beninese educational system is the ethical and health problems related to sexual harassment and sexual relations between adult actors in the system and students. The field work conducted researching this topic was a source of awareness-raising in and of itself, and one of the documents emerging (that was printed on A3 card and distributed to 90 schools and many other education actors) was a “Code of Conduct” promoting respect for all students. A Ministerial Decree prohibiting sexual relations between adult actors and students exists, but the sanctions set forth by the decree and general lack of awareness of the existence of the decree do not lead to it being taken seriously. This document, produced for use by the MEPS, provides a strategy and proposes policies that can be used to fight this serious problem, which ruins the educational possibilities and the lives of many young girls. |
| 66 | 5/28/04 | Mechanisms for community participation prepared and tested. Report submitted to USAID CTO. | Life Skills are by definition competencies for improving students’ abilities to deal with practical life issues that go beyond the walls of the classroom. As such, when proposing a Life Skills curriculum and teaching strategies within the school, the surrounding community must be informed and involved in Life Skills activities. Possible mechanisms for community involvement were initially studied in two pilot communes during field trips in April 2004. During 2004 and 2005, communal monitoring groups were established to encourage community participation, and training was provided to parent groups and other interested individuals in the 90 school communities within the 19 ‘red zone’ communes (those |

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| | | | with the lowest rates of girls' education) in order to accompany the Life Skills curriculum and teacher training materials. |
| 67 | 5/31/05 | Follow-up on implementation of strategies for community participation submitted to USAID CTO. | Evaluation of the integrated strategy by which school communities (teachers, students, parents and other interested individuals and groups) were involved in Life Skills activities was undertaken progressively, with final activities taking place in April 2005. Songs and sketches developed by community groups on Life Skills themes and broadcast on local radio through December 2005 were a strong element of community awareness-raising and motivation, considerably reinforcing what the Life Skills curriculum and teaching materials could accomplish in class. |

3. Successes and Challenges

Drawing on the description of activities in Table 1, this section highlights the key successes among project activities and the key challenges faced during the implementation of activities.

Key successes

Producing Quality Products in a Complex Political Environment

Throughout the life of the project, EQUIPE technical staff members have completed 63 deliverables in a political environment that has sometimes been plagued by inertia and untimely delays. The team has worked successfully to deliver quality projects that are relevant to the Beninese context and will impact the future of the Beninese education system. For example, the EQUIPE Pedagogy team has been instrumental in coordinating Ministry and private textbook production experts and in maintaining the pedagogical integrity and Beninese identity of the 5th and 6th grade (CM1 and CM2) textbooks and Teachers' Guides with which it has assisted. Although the EQUIPE project start-up began long after the process of 5th grade textbook and teachers' guide production should have been underway, the first set of textbooks and teachers' guides were produced in a timely manner and met a standard of high quality. CM1 teachers' guides and textbooks were made available to the Ministry (MEPS) in October 2003, in time for use in the teacher training sessions and classrooms. This dedication to timeliness was appreciated greatly by a Ministry struggling to improve education delivery in order to satisfy a disgruntled public. The following year EQUIPE repeated its' success with the CM2 textbooks that were delivered ahead of schedule by the USAID Mission Director to the Minister of Primary and Secondary Education in a much publicized event.

Linking Project Interventions for Maximized Impact

The EQUIPE contract is composed of five project areas, each with its own distinct set of deliverables and activities. Despite this contractual division of work, the possibilities for collaboration were great, and EQUIPE capitalized on these to deliver more sustainable results and improve communication among the diverse set of actors working in each project area. Two prime examples of this synergy are the integration of gender and life skills messages in the CM2 textbooks and in the pilot of CLIN 4 tools in two communities participating in the CLIN 3 grant process (described in the section below).

One of the aims of EQUIPE's Life Skills activities (of CLIN 5) was to integrate Life Skills, and particularly HIV/AIDS awareness, into the primary curriculum. Gender equity, the major focus of CLIN 2, goes hand-in-hand with Life Skills. In November 2003 EQUIPE started working with Ministry partners to define the concept of Life Skills (*competences de vie courante – CVC*) within the context of Benin's New Study Program (NPE) curriculum (the domain of CLIN 1 expertise). This process was aided by the competency-based methodology of the NPE curriculum, including almost all of the internationally-recognized Life Skills theme areas:

Health and hygiene,

Reproductive health,

Nutrition and psychosocial skills,

Personal management, and
Child rights and responsibilities.

Over the following nine months, the EQUIPE Life Skills and Girls' Education teams worked together, in consultation with the EQUIPE Pedagogy team, to produce a Life Skills curriculum for each of the grade levels. They identified Life Skills already in the NPE curriculum and drew attention to how they could be better taught in daily activities, without going beyond curricular guidelines. Complementary teacher training materials and community mobilization strategies were also developed. Trainers, teachers, and community members in the 19 'red zone' communes identified as having the lowest female schooling rates in the country were trained in Life Skills and Gender Equity .

The second example of integrated activities was more ambitious and long term: integrating Life Skills into Grade 6 (CM2) student textbooks (French and Math) and Teachers' Guides for all subject matters. Since the Grade 6 curriculum had been finalized in July 2003, what was required was to draw attention to particular topics include these in the French and Math textbooks. During the early part of the textbook/teachers' guide development process in January 2004, Life Skills and Girls' Education team members from EQUIPE participated in working sessions of the textbook/Teachers' Guide experts, explaining to them how Life Skills could be defined within the Beninese NPE context and guiding them towards inclusion of topics in the books and guides.

The EQUIPE Pedagogy team maintained this focus in the following months, with the result that the 52,500 Teachers' Guides (in each of 6 subject areas) for CM2 were distributed and used in training sessions during the month of September 2004 include in their introductory sections a description of Life Skills, and the French, Social Education, Science and Technology Education, and Physical and Sports Education guides contain activities related to specific Life Skills. Topics include: AIDS, a new threat; Paths of HIV/AIDS Contamination; Solidarity with those infected by HIV/AIDS; People and Health; Vaccination, a great scientific discovery; Personal Hygiene; Blood and Circulation; Nature and Environmental Problems; Children's Rights and Responsibilities; Learning about Democracy; Fair Play in Sports. In addition to the Teachers' Guides, Life Skills themes appear in the CM2 student textbooks, used by all CM2 students in Benin (approximately 160,000 in 2004-2005).

Promoting Transparency in Grants Selection and Management

The process of awarding community grants engaged stakeholders ranging from Ministry officials to parents. At the beginning of the process, a Commission composed of the Primary Education Directorate (DEP) and the Planning and Prospective Directorate (DPP) of the Ministry of Education (MEPS), the National Parents' Association of Benin (FENAPEB), CARE and all team leaders as well as the EQUIPE Chief of Party drafted selection criteria that were then validated by the participating communes. The transparent and collaborative process ensured that the selection proceeded smoothly and without protest from any party, including those communes that were not selected for participation. One commune mayor noted that EQUIPE's grants model "has taught us a lesson about our willingness to work in partnership with various structures, whether our objectives are similar or divergent. They have given us a good lesson in governance through the clear procedures adopted for the selection of the communes."

Creating a Foundation for Improved Education Management

Through the technical assistance of subcontractor EMI Systems, EQUIPE created tools and systems to facilitate the decentralization process and enable school districts and regional education departments to better manage education interventions. Planning documents including recommendations for improvements in the Ministry's financial and administrative management in the new context of decentralization were set forth and evaluated, demonstrating that there has been significant progress in these domains over the past three years. With the introduction of MapDecision software to the educational community, Ministry officials and technicians at central and decentralized levels, international organizations and other groups and individuals who "use" educational statistics have been provided a tool that allows access to 199 indicators related to school infrastructure, student and teacher profiles, test results and the overall school environment. Local officials trained in the use of this software noted that the new system provided them with invaluable information that increased individual and collective accountability for education results and data quality. All participants of the various training sessions expressed enthusiasm in the future potential of such an instrument. By exploring the analysis component of the program, the training provided a platform for participants to begin discussing education issues specific to their locality: lack of school facilities, lack of qualified teachers and low levels of student achievement. In the Natitingou school district of the Atacora department, where a pilot school map was integrated into the MapDecision software, regional education representatives from the Atacora region, school directors from Natitingou and members of the School Parent Association were trained in the use of the MapDecision tools in April 2004. The visual confrontation of what they know of their schools and what the statistics were telling them led to some heated discussions about the accuracy of school statistics and how these can be improved by better statistical reporting at the local level. The success of the MapDecision activities proves that the tools created of EQUIPE are valuable to local stakeholders, as both a monitoring and planning tool.

EQUIPE was provided the opportunity of using the MapDecision software, the School District budgeting tool, and the goals of the National Education for All Plan (produced within the context of CLIN 4) to improve the educational plans and budgets that had been produced by two of the CLIN 3 communal Working Groups. This experience demonstrated the value of synergistic collaboration between various activity areas and provided the communes of Toviklin and Kandi with revised education plans and budgets that took into consideration the statistical realities of the two communes as well as their priorities for development.

Challenges

Benin's ongoing crisis in education

Throughout the life of the EQUIPE project, the Beninese education system has maneuvered through various stages of crisis that have threatened to derail the reform process. The current reality finds Benin with a severe shortage of qualified teachers, no clear teacher recruitment policy, embryonic teacher training colleges whose capacity cannot hope to meet the need for trained teachers in the long term, and a decentralization process that devolves increasing responsibility for financial management to the districts now called upon to provide education without a corresponding increase in their human and financial resources. The overall weak education structure has been further threatened by persistent teacher strikes, budget cuts (equaling 43 percent in 2004), public disapproval of the New Study Program, and a lack of

qualified and motivated personnel within certain divisions of the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education. The corruption and impunity that is generalized throughout modern Beninese society has insidious effects on collaborative efforts with government agents and attempts to innovate within the education system. Though EQUIPE staff has worked tirelessly to address these problems, the obstacles have resulted in a challenging work environment and difficulty in meeting certain contractual deliverable dates due to the importance of using a collaborative strategy with Ministry partners in order to build capacity within the Ministry.

Teacher strikes have been a recurrent problem over the past ten years, especially since the generalization of the New Study Program throughout the primary system, which began in 1999. At the time that the EQUIPE contract was signed in February 2003, teachers had already been on strike for several months of the school year. By the end of the academic year of 2002-2003, students had completed only two months of school. Instead of repeating the missed school year, the Ministry instituted a three-year “special program” that collapsed and shifted subject matters between grades to compensate for the school time lost to teacher strikes. While this program provided continuous academic instruction to primary school children, it raised logistical and institutional challenges that required additional technical support from EQUIPE staff. Luckily, teachers refrained from striking during the 2003-04 school year, allowing the system to begin recovering from the previous year’s devastating effects. However, strikes again ushered in the 2004-2005 school year and lasted through mid-January 2006. The inability of the Ministry to respond to teacher strikes and stabilize the education system has elicited a public outcry from both international donors, who question the accreditation of the Beninese schooling system, and parents who were already suspicious of reform efforts. EQUIPE staff has worked with the Ministry to address the poor public perception of the New Study Program through the development of a communications strategy that organized different media campaigns to highlight positive aspects of the reform and counter the negative press coverage that has increased over the past three years.

Insufficient resources and incentives in the ministry

In addition to these external conditions, EQUIPE has been challenged by an overall lack of organizational infrastructure and human capacity within the different divisions of the MEPS, collaboration with whom is integral to the success of EQUIPE’s ability to meet contractual deliverables and submit quality products. In addition, the Ministry has exhibited a lack of ownership of activities where EQUIPE is involved, often refraining from commenting on reports and stalling on the implementation of certain reform policies like the Policy for Recruiting and Maintaining More Female Teachers. The Desk Publishing Unit of INFRE and the Statistical Service of the DPP are examples of divisions within the Ministry that resisted transforming themselves to provide the services the Ministry requires within the reform process. Despite a concerted effort from EQUIPE technical staff, these divisions remain inefficient and unable to institute sustainable change in their activities.

EQUIPE worked with the Desktop Publishing Unit throughout the course of the project to improve its capacity to design and publish textbooks. The publication of the new grade 5 and grade 6 textbooks provided a platform to test the Unit’s capability to perform this task. From the beginning of the project, EQUIPE was faced with several challenges: the Unit did not have enough computers and software to accomplish the task; DPU staff members were severely under- trained; and there was an overall lack of motivation on the part of Ministry staff, reasons

for which range from poor leadership to petty concerns such as disapproval of the per diem rate distributed by EQUIPE for trainings. Despite these obstacles, EQUIPE continued to work with the DPU, completing the grade 5 and grade 6 French and math textbooks and training MEPS personnel in textbook design. Unfortunately, DPU personnel refused to take a final diagnostic test at the end of their 18-month training, so project staff had to rely on personal observations to assess how their technical improvement.

Lethargy within the Statistical Service of the DPP has also presented challenges to the success of CLIN 4 interventions. Throughout the three years of the EQUIPE contract, SSGI leadership within the Ministry has been weak, a problem that was exacerbated by the departure midway through the project of the Assistant DPP, who was the only person willing to demonstrate practical statistical expertise, to a post in another department. The Ministry team has been consistently inefficient in undertaking the admittedly complicated set of tasks that result in production of the Annual Statistics Yearbook, despite targeted practical and technical training in new tools designed to make the process more efficient. A general lack of will on SSGI personnel to use innovations such as newly introduced software and data collection sheets made progress much slower than it needs to be. Despite the introduction of MapDecision, a tool that would enable the Ministry to make decisions according to a programmatic needs analysis, the MEPS continues to make politically motivated decisions regarding new school creation, allocation of resources, etc., instead of decisions guided by easily accessible statistical information. This, coupled with an overall limited capacity in ICT throughout all levels of the Ministry, will continue to cripple the Beninese education system, particularly if donor support of decentralization activities does not continue.

The future of the National Girls' Network for the Promotion of Girls' Education (NNPGE)

EQUIPE's working relationship with the Girls' Network has been characterized by strong mutual commitment to the goal of promoting girls' education alongside ambivalence regarding the administrative and programmatic aspects of the Network's operations. Confusion regarding CARE funding of programmatic activities and direct EQUIPE funding of administrative activities took several months and many meetings to resolve. Delays occurred at the beginning of the contract for a variety of reasons. Contractually, USAID had omitted the funds designated for the Girls' Network administrative needs in the original contract. To rectify this problem, EQUIPE underwent a contract modification to authorize NNPGE activities. Once this problem was solved, the Girls' Network struggled with the programmatic funding mechanism provided through EQUIPE's subcontractor CARE which, in their opinion, proved stifling and inflexible due to its results-based framework. The problem required intervention by USAID, which, in early 2004, questioned whether funding to the Girls' Network should continue past June 2004, should they continue to cause unnecessary delays in finalizing and implementing their action plan. While project activities were implemented successfully after these initial problems were resolved, the future of the Girls' Network is uncertain, due to its legal status, which remains unchanged after several years' effort to alter it. Officially, the organization is still an institution under Ministry supervision but one that is, though documentation was painstakingly prepared to change its status to that of an NGO. A change to NGO status, which was one of the primary recommendations of the 2003 evaluation leading to the Network's action plan, would enable the Network to seek funding from a variety of sources instead of continuing to be financially dependent on USAID funding. But the Minister and the Directors in charge of the Girls'

Network consistently refused to make decisions regarding this issue. The most recent audience with the Minister took place in November 2005, with no result despite frequent follow-up. Given this situation, should USAID discontinue support to the Network, it is doubtful that it will have the means to function as it has to date. Several attempts have been made to request that the organization be severed from the Ministry, so that it could function as an NGO. To date, this has not been resolved effectively.

Contract administration

In addition to the situational and technical challenges described above, EQUIPE contract administration has proved to be complex and time consuming for both field and headquarters staff. Overall, the contract has undergone ten modifications, including extensive budget realignments. Preparing and finalizing these modifications has often contributed to the delay of technical activities and impeded clear communication with partners. The contract restricted flexibility in moving funds amongst and within CLINS and sub-CLINs when opportunities and constraints in implementation required such flexibility.

For example, ambiguous contractual language led to a misunderstanding of EQUIPE's responsibilities in reimbursing the Ministry for teacher training activities. While EQUIPE had budgeted for \$1 million for *all* teacher training activities, USAID envisioned spending over \$1 million each year. This required a substantial increase in the overall budget. Administration of teacher training reimbursements was later complicated by the fact that the Ministry did not understand the new procedures for reimbursement, despite USAID Project Implementation Letters explaining them. Previously, the Ministry had been directly reimbursed by USAID, and the work by both USAID and EQUIPE of initiating them to the new system caused some delays in executing the reimbursement for the 2003 teacher training session.

The realigned budget and deliverables schedule that was signed on December 5, 2003 took into consideration budgetary aspects of issues related to teacher training reimbursement, financial provision for the Girls' Network administration funding (referred to above), the difference between original inventory projections and the actual inventory undertaken by EQUIPE staff, as well as the logistical problems posed by a delay in project award/startup and the year-long school strike in Benin. The delay in finalization of the budget caused considerable logistical difficulty, given that several staff members as well as necessary computer equipment and vehicles were not approved until ten months after the startup of the project.

One problem that strongly affected the budget of the overall project was the significant decrease in the dollar exchange rate over the life of the project. While the exchange rate started off at over 600 fcfa to the dollar in 2003 (it had been over 700 fcfa in 2002), it quickly dipped to the low 500s, where it stayed for much of the life of the project, descending to 480 fcfa to the dollar at one point. By April 2005, the project had already "lost" over \$500,000 due to the poor exchange rate, as compared with the conservative (at that time) 600 fcfa rate that had been used when proposing the final budget in January 2003. The funds lost to the exchange rate were the primary motivation for EQUIPE's request in May 2005 for additional funds, a request which led to an extensive process of budget readjustment to demonstrate the need for additional funds. When USAID informed Creative Associates that such funds were not available, the budget was again realigned, with an ending date of December 2005 proposed. This realignment was accepted, and fortunately the project was able to conclude "in the black," even given a two

month no-cost extension that was accorded to allow completion of several deliverables and winding up of administrative activities.

Contract language

EQUIPE technical staff experienced problems with the manner in which certain deliverables were worded within the contract, particularly those deliverables calling for the creation of education “policies”. Because the Government of Benin through the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (MEPS) has sovereignty over its own policies, the Ministry and EQUIPE felt that this language was not appropriate to the context. Following a June 15, 2005 meeting between all interested parties, the contract language was modified to focus on EQUIPE submission of “policy proposals” instead of “policies.”

4. Conclusions

The EQUIPE project has successfully undertaken a complex set of activities in support of USAID/Benin’s Strategic Objective for education: *“More Children Receive a Quality Basic Education on an Equitable Basis.”* The project has improved equity and quality by increasing decentralization and community participation in Benin’s primary education system. For this purpose it has used an integrated strategy that revolved around capacity-building for context-appropriate, sustainable reform. Specific EQUIPE components included strengthened pedagogy, more effective curricula and Textbooks, improved environments for girls’ and HIV/AIDS education, as well as more effective, decentralized education management.

Annex 1. CARE Final Report

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EQUIPE PROJECT

Equity and Quality in Primary Education in Benin

FINAL REport

CLINS UNDER CARE CONTRACT

January 2006

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| Executive Summary | 35 |
| Introduction | 38 |
| I – Comparative Table of activities/results planned and achieved | 39 |
| 1.1 Increased girls schooling in target areas | 39 |
| 1.2 Improved Environment for the Stakeholders (EAA) | 44 |
| 1.3 : HIV/AIDS and the education sector | 50 |
| II- Explanations on unattained or exceeded results | 55 |
| 2.1- Unattained results | 55 |
| 2.2- Exceeded Results | 55 |
| III- Background of the success | 57 |
| 3.1- Good Governance as intervention strategy | 57 |
| 3.2- The experience of working groups on education must be capitalised | 57 |
| 3.3- Communities are prepared to play their part | 58 |
| 3.4- Access granted thanks to two partners | 58 |
| 3.5- Battle won by the Malanville working Group | 59 |
| 3.6- There is definitely another dimension in combating HIV/AIDS | 59 |
| 3.7- Women’s Commitment and Desire in educating the girl child | 60 |
| 3.8- Going farther in combating the HIV/AIDS within the MEPS | Error! Bookmark not defined. |
| IV- State of progress accomplished in the area of the implementation of the indicators | 60 |
| V- Lessons learnt and recommendations | 61 |
| 5.1- Lessons learnt | 61 |
| 5.2- Recommendations | 62 |
| Conclusion | 63 |

Executive Summary

The Equity and Quality in Primary Education (EQUIPE) Project funded by USAID to support the government of Benin aims at providing technical assistance to the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (MEPS) to carry out reforms in primary education that started in 1991. The EQUIPE Project has been implemented by Creative Associates International Inc. in partnership with CARE International and EMI Systems. This Project has five (5) teams (or CLINs): (1) improved pedagogical system, (2) increase in the rate of girl child education in the target areas, (3) improved environment for the stakeholders, (4) improved educational management system, (5) HIV/AIDS and the educational sector.

CARE, as the subcontractor of Creative Associates, is responsible for the implementation of some of the responsibilities found in CLINs 2) Improved socio-cultural Environment for the education of the girl-child in target areas with low rates, 3) Improved Environment for the participation of decentralized local administrations in the management of the education system, and 5) the Management of the impact of HIV/AIDS in the educational sector.

The methodology adopted and followed by CARE is the same for the all of the three CLINs; it emphasizes capacity building for supporting institutions through increased participation of their members in the planning and implementation activities identified and selected. The various phases of this process are related to: the development of working tools and documents, the organization and the facilitation of workshops or exchange meetings on the tools, the production of expected results by the stakeholders themselves and the organization of validation meetings on documents produced. This participatory approach enabled us not only to achieve all the expected results of the project, but also the empowered institutions (Girls Education Network and HIV/AIDS focal unit) to own the achievements and plan to sustain the activities at the end of the project.

All the activities planned and implemented during the three (3) years of operation enabled CARE to realize and gradually submit the twelve (12) different projected results according to the provisions of the contract (deliverables) of this project. The deliverables were:

1. Implementation Plan for the recommendations of the Assessment of the National Network for the Promotion of Girls Education (RNPSF) developed: report submitted on June 30th 2003 ;
 2. Focal unit against HIV/AIDS of MEPS established: report submitted on September 30th 2003;
 3. Working groups set up in at least 15 rural communes and districts: report submitted on December 30th 2003;
 4. Education plans and budgets prepared in at least 15 rural communes: report submitted on May 30th 2004 ;
-

5. Operational Plan of the Network implemented: report submitted on June 30th 2004 ;
6. Capitalization of girls education programming experiences carried out by CARE, World Learning and other organizations: report submitted on June 30th 2004;
7. A plan to promote increased participation of the private sector and civil society in education service delivery prepared: report submitted on June 30th 2004 ;
8. Survey on the impact of HIV/AIDS on education sector carried out: report submitted on June 30th 2004;
9. Discussions on HIV/AIDS policy in education held and report submitted on June 30th 2004;
10. Strategic plan and management plans on HIV/AIDS in education developed and report submitted on December 31st 2004;
11. Policy elements on girls education developed and report submitted on June 30th 2005;
12. Incentives to the promotion of girls education implemented and assessed: report submitted on June 30th 2005.

In addition to the contractual results, opportunities have been offered for beneficiary institutions to implement technical assistance provided to them. These institutions developed specific initiatives supported technically and financially by EQUIPE/CARE, to practice management tools they newly acquired. These initiatives are as follows:

- ❖ The grant allocated to 13 out of the 20 communes assisted by the project, to start the implementation of their education plan and budget through the experimentation of incentives for private sector and civil society for funding educational services. The 13 communes therefore mobilized local resources up to 71.948.071 Fcfa (54.66% of total budget) to fund infrastructure and school furniture. The grant provided by EQUIPE project is 59.677.987 Fcfa, (45.33% of the budget). The decentralized local authorities have thereby demonstrated their capacity and competence to better manage education resources at local level, if these resources were effectively allocated to them by the central government.
 - ❖ The Girls Education Network was supported by the project to implement the extension of girls education experiences capitalized by CARE (tutorial and rehearsal system) and from World Education (Students Mothers Association) in all the communes with a low rate of girls education that have not benefited from these experiences. This initiative has enabled the Network to mobilize 2 new groups of key stakeholders in the promotion of girls education in rural areas: 1) Students mothers who intervene for an improved attendance of girls to school and 2) teachers who increasingly apply the practice of gender equity in class and pay more attention to the performance of girls in schools.
 - ❖ The HIV/AIDS Focal Unit was supported for the implementation of activities programmed in its working plan for 2005 concerning capacity building of its members for a long term management of HIV/AIDS impact on teachers, students and administrative staff.
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- ❖ The documentation of experiences of empowering partners and dissemination to ensure sustainability of outcomes.

Introduction

The EQUIPE project is a project of the government of Benin, funded by USAID, which aims at helping the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (MEPS) to improve access to primary education, as well as to promote the internal quality and the efficiency of education. This project is implemented by Creative Associates Inc., International, in partnership with two other institutions, CARE International and EMI System.

The CLINs under the responsibility of CARE were related to capacity building of key stakeholders in charge of the promotion education reforms at local level. These stakeholders are: 1) local government authorities that have to acquire new capacities to better play their role of promotion and management of the primary education system; 2) the National Network for the promotion of girls education which institutional reform should lead to the acquisition of capacities for the real promotion of a conducive socio-cultural environment to girls education in all areas with low enrolments rate; 3) the Focal unit against HIV/AIDS established within the Ministry of Education, to be established and reinforced in order to support all initiatives of the MoE concerning the management of the impact of HIV/AIDS on education.

Launched in January 2003, the various activities of this project were implemented during three years in all the beneficiary areas, and ended in January 2006, ending date of contract with CAII. The entire activity was planned and led by a multidisciplinary team of 4 full-time employees; the methodology was participatory and constantly focused on the stakeholders and the beneficiaries as key to the whole process of reinforcement of their institutions.

This final implementation report aims at presenting the results achieved during the three years of implementation. The reports presents respectively:

- the comparison of actual activities and results recorded;
- Explanations of results that were not achieved as planned or have been modified;
- Success stories;
- A summary of progress made in achieving indicator targets during the program; and
- Recommendations and lessons learned, related to overall program results.

1. Comparative Table of activities/results planned and achieved

1.1 Increased girls schooling in target areas

| Activities and Results Planned | Dates of Accomplishment | Activities and Results achieved |
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| Deliverable #37 Implementation Plan of recommendations made and report submitted to USAID | | |
| Support the Network in developing an implementation plan of recommendations contained in the last assessment | June 30 th 2003 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The plan developed by the Network takes into account the recommendations of its earlier assessment, particularly the points concerning the increase in its personnel and the review of its legal status. ▪ The Plan as it is proposed was submitted to USAID on June 30th 2003. |
| Deliverable #38. Network Plan implemented and the report submitted to USAID | | |
| The fundamental documents of the Network is reviewed by the members of the Board of Directors | June 30 th 2004 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The workshop on fundamental document review was held from February 23rd to 26th 2004 and it was complemented by another one which focused on bye-laws; ▪ The documents developed (constitution and bye-laws) which then constituted the topic of an approval meeting is awaiting adoption by the General Assembly for it to be operational; ▪ The option retained in this process is that the Network should become an Associative Body regulated by the law of 1901 and independent of any governmental institution. |
| Adaptation of operational, administrative and financial management manuals of the Network, to the new documents | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The administrative, financial, management and operational manuals were adapted to the content of the draft constitution that is to regulate the Network; ▪ The drafts of these manuals will be submitted for adoption to the next General Assembly which will adopt the new legal constitution of the Network. |
| Holding of the General Assembly for the adoption of the new fundamental documents of the National Network for the promotion of Girls Education (RNPSF) | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ On October 20th 2005, an audience was granted to the Network by the Minister of Education following the request n°RES-SP/138-05/ABA/RPHO introduced on October 4th 2005. What emerged essentially was the approval by the MEPS of the implementation of institutional reform; however the Minister expressed the need to be given the opportunity to study the drafts of the documents to make an informed decision on it. |

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| Reinforcing the Permanent Secretariat of the Network with technical staff | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The recruitment of an Administrative Assistant and a Program Officer was made in order to reinforce the Executive Secretariat of the Network; ▪ A mixed team made up of members from the EQUIPE project and from the Network conducted the recruitment process that was concluded on April 20th 2004. |
| Support the Network to develop advocacy for the protection of girls in schools | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A ministerial decree including sanctions against perpetrators of sexual violence in schools, is developed and signed on October 1st 2003 by the Ministers of Primary, Secondary and Technical Education and Professional Training after an intensive discussion by the stakeholders. ▪ Dissemination strategies of the Decree developed and implemented. |
| Preparation and signing of a protocol to regulate the relationship between the Network, EQUIPE and CARE | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The protocol developed by CARE was signed on June 28th 2004 by RNPSF, CARE International and EQUIPE. |
| Building the capacity of Communal Committees for the Promotion of Girls Education | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ According to the statistics of 2003, the 19 communes that record a girl child education of less than 53% benefited from capacity building in Gender Equity and Life Skills (EEC/CVC) to give the local stakeholders the capacity to mitigate negative factors to girl child education and implement the correction of the observed trend. Therefore, two joint teams, EQUIPE/RNPSF were formed and carried out training programs during the period from August to October 2004. ▪ These communes are So-Ava and Za-Kpota, Aguégués and Ouinhi, Matéri, Cobly, Kérou, Boukoumbé, Tanguiéta, Copargo, Kandi, Karimama, Ségbana, Malanville, Banikoara, Gogounou, Kalalé, Nikki and Pèrèrè. ▪ In total, 325 local stakeholders who are members of Communal Committees for the Promotion of Girls Education (CCPSF) and Communal Commissions for Social and Cultural Affairs (CASC) were formed. |
| Organization of national forum on Girls Education | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The forum was organized on December 16th and 17th 2004 in Cotonou ; ▪ The forum brought together almost 130 participants representing international institutions and NGOs working in the area of girl child education, Parliamentarians, locally elected representatives, heads of schools, districts, representatives of Communal Committees of Social and Cultural Affairs from 19 communes including the technical officers of the MEPS ; ▪ The results enabled CARE to start the process of mapping stakeholders intervening in girls education. |
| Various intermediary reports designed and submitted to USAID | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The wrap up was made on the implementation of recommendations of the assessment and the report was sent to USAID on June 30th 2004; |

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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A second report on the process of negotiation with the MoE on the authorization for the holding of the General Assembly was prepared and submitted to USAID on December 30th 2004. |
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| Deliverable #39 | | |
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| Capitalization of the experiences of CARE, World Learning and others carried out and the report submitted to USAID | | |
| Identification and contact with organizations whose experiences will be capitalized | June 30 th 2004 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Girls education stakeholders were identified and letters were sent obtain their agreement for the capitalization of their experiences; ▪ A calendar of visits negotiated with them. |
| Organization and Implementation of the mission of capitalization of experiences | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Terms of Reference of the capitalization mission were developed and the budget was submitted to CARE ▪ The resources needed for the implementation of mission were made available ▪ the tools for data collection were developed and discussed among the members of the joint teams (EQUIPE/RNPSF); ▪ The teams went to the field (offices and intervention sites of the stakeholders were selected) for data collection; ▪ The data collected were analyzed and exploited ▪ On June 30th 2004, the report on the Deliverable on the capitalization of experiences of CARE, World Learning and others were submitted to USAID. |
| Implementation of the grant for the funding of successful initiatives | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ RNPSF developed and submitted to EQUIPE a draft technical and financial proposal to extend the experience of Students Mothers Associations (World Education) and of tutorial/rehearsal of CARE to other communes with low rate of girls education on September 3rd 2004. ▪ A joint commission CARE/EQUIPE analyzed on September 30th 2004, the document submitted by RNPSF and formulated observations. ▪ The meeting for reporting back on the discussions and observations with RNPSF took place on October 29th 2004 ; it brought together the Permanent Secretary and the Program Officer of RNPSF, including the participants at the meeting during which the observations were formulated, ▪ The revised document was presented on November 9th 2004. |

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| <p>Implementation of experiences in girls education</p> | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In the context of implementation of the grants, a first allocation of 20,000,000 FCFA over the initial amount, was made available to the RNPSF by CARE ; ▪ 6 NGOs (ADIL, GRABS, CERABE, APEM, GAJES, and DERANA) intervene in the 15 communes shortlisted (So-Ava, Aguégués, Ouinhi, Za-Kpota, Copargo, Kalalé, Kérou, Tanguiéta, Boukoumbé, Matéri, Cobly, Banikoara, Karimama, Sègbana and Malanville) to put in place Students Mothers Associations and provide guidance (the 4 other communes have already benefited from the same program developed by World Education) ; ▪ The reports of partner NGOs, the monitoring reports from Communal Committees for the Promotion of Girl Child Education (CCPSF) and the monitoring missions of the Network constitute great landmarks in the monitoring and evaluation process put in place to ensure effectiveness and efficiency of work on the field; ▪ After discussions with CARE and EQUIPE and the review of budgets, it was decided to increase the grant allocated to the Network from 30,000,000 to 38,000,000 CFA. |
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Deliverable #40.

Aspects of national policy on girls education submitted to the CTO of USAID

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| <p><i>Initial formulation of the Deliverable 40 : “Policy¹ of girl child education finalised and submitted to the CTO of USAID ”</i></p> <p><i>Proposed Modification:</i></p> <p><i>Aspects of national policy on girl child education developed and the report submitted to the CTO of USAID »</i></p> | <p>June 30th 2005</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The specific education policy document on access and equity developed in June 1996 by the Ministry of National Education and Scientific Research in the framework of the definition of national policy in terms of access and equity in the area of education, was the subject of the survey to determine the improvements to be made in the light of current realities; ▪ A visit timetable has been sent to those targeted to be interviewed. ▪ The TOR of the mission and the data collection tool on perception and solution approaches were developed by the Network with the support of the Institutional Development Advisor and discussed with the partners of the MEPS (DPS, DEP, DPP, DIP) ; ▪ The data collection mission was done by a tripartite team of EQUIPE/MEPS/RNPSF in the 31 communes (the following 12 communes: Zogbodomè, Agbangninzoun, Dangbo, Pobè, Adja-Ouèrè, Toffo, Allada, Zè, Toviklin, Lalo, Klouékanmè and Bopa were added to the 19 original ones of the Network to cover all districts by taking into account their education rate). During the mission, the various teams had to meet the DDEPS, the C/SOSP, the C/SEMP, the CCS, Pedagogical Advisors, head teachers, teachers, trade unions, Parent and Teacher Associations, Women’s groups, local representatives and opinion leaders.) ; ▪ The use of information collected enabled the diagnosis of the current policy, the identification of its strengths and weaknesses and the listing of opinions and recommendations of various stakeholders interviewed on the filed in connection with girls education. ▪ A workshop on policy implementation was organized from April 18th to 22nd 2005 and brought together 19 people) ; ▪ The mission of the workshop was changed after the Directress of Educational Promotion (DPS) reminded the participants that the development of the policy is within the competence of the MEPS and that, in addition, the MEPS was planning to recruit consultants for its development: instead of a workshop to update the policy, partners rather had to develop and propose aspects of the policy on girls education; ▪ On June 30th 2005 a report on « aspects of the national policy on girls |
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¹ In the contract, the word “national” is not included, despite the fact that this term is an important part of the current discussion. The deliverable language used by the Girls’ Education team is “*Eléments de politique nationale de scolarisation des filles soumis au CTO de l’USAID*”

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| | | education » was submitted to USAID. |
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1.2 Improved Environment for the Stakeholders (EAA)

| <i>Planned Activities and Results</i> | <i>Dates of Accomplishment</i> | <i>Activities and Results Achieved</i> |
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| CLIN 3. IMPROVED ENVIRONMENT FOR THE STAKEHOLDERS | | |
| <i>RI 3.Improved Environment for the Stakeholders</i> | | |
| Milestone #7. | | |
| Increased involvement of decentralized local authorities in the funding of school management | | |
| Working groups have been set up in at least 15 rural communes in 4 districts | December 30 th 2003 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research on and analysis of documents regulating public participation in education. • The holding of a working meeting on the choice of districts of intervention and adoption of criteria for the selection of communes. • Development of terms of reference on the participation of communes in the management of the educational system. |

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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation of the content of presentations for the workshops to inform stakeholders. • Organization of 4 district workshops on information and motivation of stakeholders on the EQUIPE project and the discussions on the criteria of selection of communes (the workshops were held from July 14th to 23rd 2003 in Parakou, Kandi, Lokossa and Aplahoué). • Collection, study and analysis of expression of interest of communes in the process of local planning (25 communes from districts of Borgou, Alibori, Mono and Couffo expressed interest) • Selection of communes; 20 communes were selected in a meeting on August 28th 2003 gathering the representatives of USAID, FENAPEB, CARE, DEP and DPP of MEPS, the facilitators of the CLIN and the COP of EQUIPE. The communes are Lokossa, Athiémé, Grand-Popo et Bopa for the Mono region; Dogbo, Aplahoué, Djakotomey, Lalo, Klouékanmè and Toviklin for Couffo; Malanville, Kandi, Banikoara and Gogounou for Alibori; Tchaourou, N'dali, Nikki, Pèrèrè, Bembéréké and Kalalé for Borgou. The notification of the results was sent to the 25 communes that bidded. • Organization of 20 communal workshops on social negotiation from September 14th to October 18th 2003; 500 people participated in these workshops during which the restitution of the results of the selection of communes was done and the adoption of the draft partnership agreement between the EQUIPE project and the communes. • Organization of 20 communal workshops to support the setting up of education working groups from November 3rd to December 12th 2003; the workshops brought together about 500 people. The working groups were established. Each working group had 15 people from several institutions of civil society and the private sector of the commune involved in school funding and management. • Development and submission of the deliverable report to USAID. |
| Plans and budgets on education are prepared in at least 15 rural communes | May 30 th 2004 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of tool to collect data in school and other parameters in line with education. • Training of members of 20 working groups in the use of the data collection tools at the end of November, and the beginning of December 2003 • Reception, study and analysis of data collected in communes to formulate education issues. • Development of 4 methodological tools to help the working groups to reflect on the strategic orientations and to develop the education plan and budgets of their commune. • Holding of 4 district workshops assess situation of basic education and to present the methodological tools for the development of plans and budgets for education on January 27th at Parakou, January 29th at Kandi, February 12th and 13th respectively at Lokossa and Aplahoué. • Reception, study and analysis of proposals of plans and budgets of communes. |

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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holding of 20 communal workshops to help the working groups to finalize their educational plans and budgets from March 26th to April 4th; from April 12th to 17th 2004 in the districts of Borgou and Alibori, and from April 26th to the of May 12th 2004 in the districts of Mono and Couffo. • Summary of productions, report preparation and submission to USAID. |
| A plan meant to encourage an increased participation of the private sector and the civil society in educational service delivery has been prepared and submitted. | June 30 th 2005 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Development of a working tool for data collection on incentives in the communes. ▪ Collection of propositions of incentives of 17² communal during the communal workshops for the finalization of educational plans and budgets from March to May 2004 in the districts of Borgou, Alibori, Mono and Couffo ▪ Reception, study and analysis of incentives collected in 17 communes. ▪ Documentary Research on successful experiences of incentives of other countries (Senegal and Malawi). ▪ Development of an overall incentive plan taking into account proposals from communal plans. ▪ Report preparation and submission to USAID. |

² In the 3 remaining communes, the point on the incentives couldn't be discussed in the workshop.

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| <p>Incentives have been applied and assessed.</p> | <p>June 30th 2005</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Holding of 4 district workshops to present the overall incentives plan and call for the development of communal incentive plans in Borgou, Alibori, Mono and Couffo respectively on August 24th, August 26th, September 2nd and 3rd 2004. ▪ Reception, study and analysis of proposals of communal plans of incentives. ▪ Organization of 4 district workshops to help the working groups finalize the communal plans on incentives from October 25th to 29th 2004 in the districts of Borgou and Alibori and from November 9th to 12th 2004 in districts of Mono and Couffo. ▪ Development of draft policy for grant allocation to the communes. ▪ Organization of 4 district workshops in August and September 2004 to discuss with working groups members and to call for the development and submission of documents on micro projects. ▪ Participation in meetings of the consultative board of RTI and in meetings to analyze micro projects submitted to RTI by communes. ▪ Holding of 3 meetings with the Mayors, COP of EQUIPE and the CARE Benin Education Program Officer to arouse the commitment of local authorities for the implementation of incentive plans and the mobilization of resources for the realization of their micro projects. These meetings were held from February 8th to 12th 2005 and gathered 55 participants out of the 60 expected. ▪ Development of data collection and synthesis tools on the implementation of incentive and education plans. ▪ Organization of 4 district workshops for discussions on evaluation and data collection tools, on March 21st and 22nd 2005 at Parakou for the communes of Borgou, on March 24th and 25th 2005 at Kandi for the communes of Alibori, on 29th and 30th March 2005 at Lokossa for the communes of Mono and March 31st and on April 1st at Aplahoué for Couffo. 82 participants among whom 28 women participated in these meetings. ▪ Development of draft policy in allocating grants to communes (the documents were finalized in April and May 2005; the main points are: communes contribute at least at 50% of the total budget of their projects; starting up of all projects with the contribution of the communes prior to the grant from EQUIPE; no micro project exceed 12 million; contribution of EQUIPE Project in 2 installments, the first of 60% at mid-term of the project and the second of 40% at the end.) ▪ Holding of 3 sessions of the micro projects selection committee on March 2nd, May 20th and July 8th 2005. During these sessions, 16 micro projects of 15 municipalities were approved. Were part |
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| | | <p>of the selection committee, the COP of EQUIPE, 1 representative of CARE, 2 representatives of USAID, 3 representatives of the MoE (1 from Primary education management, 1 from the Direction of the Promotion of Schooling and 1 from the Direction of Infrastructures, Equipment and Material).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Funding of 13 micro projects in 13 partner communes. The total value of micro projects is 131,626,058 Fcfa. The total contribution of the communes is of 71,948,071 Fcfa, representing 54,66% of the micro project budgets. The amount of the grant of EQUIPE project is 59,677,987 Fcfa, 45,33 %. The micro projects were in 3 categories : building of classrooms in 8 communes, is 61,53 % of the projects; repairing of classrooms in 2 municipalities, 15 % and manufacture of benches in 3 municipalities, 23,07% of projects. As results of the implementation of the micro projects, 22 new classrooms are build and 15 repaired, improving the working environment for at least 1850 students; 1174 benches offered sitting places to at least 2348 pupils ; 53 teachers were equipped with 53 tables and chairs; 7 desks were made or repaired for 7 school head offices. ▪ Organization of 3 monitoring visits in communes beneficiaries of micro projects. The first visit was held in May 29th till June 10th 2005, and concerned the sites where infrastructures will be built. The facilitators of the CLIN 3 EAA, met with local elected members, Communes Education Authorities, members of working groups and members of the commune technical services, and discussed about the availability of their contribution and the management of the VAT. The second visit up took place on September 8th and 9th 2005 in the communes Mono and Couffo, and from September 19th to 23rd 2005 in Borgou and Alibori. This visit was a mid-term monitoring and was hold when the communes ended the works with their contribution. It was noticed that the implementation was going on effectively and that commune technical services followed up regularly the projects sites. The third and last visit was paid from November 28th to December 11th 2005, at the end of projects. At that time, all buildings, repairs, furniture were ready, and followed technical requirements. Parents expressed their satisfaction, and committed to send their children to the school; students and teachers were motivated to give their best to produce good results. ▪ Improvement of the communes education plans in Toviklin and Kandi, in collaboration with the CLIN 4 of EQUIPE : On September 5th and 6th 2005 in Toviklin, 15th and 16th in Kandi, the CLINs 3 and 4 teams met with the working group and each of the communes councils for the continuation of the improvement of their education plan started in Porto Novo in August 2005. In each of the communes, the Map decision, the millennium development goals and a software on commune education budget preparation were presented to the members of the working group and the commune council. Participants found these tools very interesting for planning. The delegates of working groups who attended the Porto Novo workshop shared outcomes of that workshop, especially changes made to their education plans and the rationale behind these changes. Members of the working groups and councils made some amendments and confirmed the |
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| | | <p>education plans. In Toviklin, the Map decision was installed at the city hall (the computer of the district education office is temporary out of use). In Kandi, the software is installed in the city hall as well as in the district education office.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Organization of 4 regional workshops for the closure of the project activities in November and December. During these workshops, participants design sustainability strategy for their education plan. They reviewed activities realized in the education plans of the communes and assessed their effects. Every municipality planned, on one hand, activities which will be undertaken with or without internal financial resources and, on the other hand, activities which will require external technical and financial supports. 79 persons (21 women) attended these workshops.▪ Participation in the meetings of the consultative committee of RTI and in the projects analysis sessions communes partners of RTI. The objective of this synergy is to share experiences between RTI project and EQUIPE, two projects working in the context of decentralization with almost the same actors in the same areas. |
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1.3 : HIV/AIDS and the education sector

| CLIN 5 HIV/AIDS AND THE EDUCATION SECTOR | | |
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| <i>Activities and Planned Results</i> | <i>Dates of Accomplishment</i> | <i>Activities and Results Achieved</i> |
| Objective: Build capacity of the MEPS for strategic planning and the long term impact of HIV/AIDS on teachers, the administrative personnel and the pupils. | | |
| Milestone # 59 | | |
| Study on the impact HIV/AIDS on the education sector is realized | | |
| The study of the impact of HIV/AIDS on the education sector is realized | June 30 th 2004 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Development of the terms of reference of the study (amendment by the stakeholders of the MEPS) December 2003. ▪ Pre selection of five (05) consultants out of fourteen (14) to carry out the study. ▪ Selection of Consultant. Three working sessions held on 07, 09 and 12 January 2004 led to the identification and recruitment of a principal consultant to carry out the HIV/AIDS impact assessment on Primary education in Benin. ▪ Amendment of data collection tools by CARE and EQUIPE staff. ▪ Organization of a pedagogical workshop on the implementation of the study. This meeting held on March 2nd 2004, brought together staff from EQUIPE Project, CARE, Ministry of Education, USAID. ▪ Monitoring of the study procedure on the field. The CLIN responsible visited data collectors on the field workers at Comé and Abomey. ▪ Holding of 2 study and feedback sessions on draft report on May 13th and June 9th 2004 in Cotonou, with the participation of the COP of EQUIPE, CARE Education team, CARE USA Education Senior Technical Advisor. ▪ Finalization of study report by the consultant, with the education team of CARE, closely involved. ▪ Organization of restitution and validation workshop of the study, held on June 21st 2004 in Porto-Novo. |

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| | | <p>More than 40 participants from the Ministry of Education, USAID, EQUIPE project, CARE and other education program took part in the workshop.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Report preparation and submission to USAID on June 30th 2004. |
| <p>Milestone # 60 The HIV/AIDS management unit of Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (MEPS) established</p> | | |
| <p>The HIV/AIDS management unit of MEPS was established</p> | <p>September 30th 2003</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Realization of the institutional diagnosis of the Focal Unit against HIV/AIDS (UFLS) of the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (MEPS) on the 18 July 2003. The UFLS was set up before the EQUIPE project. In order to have an overview at the starting point, the institutional diagnosis of the UFLS was conducted in July 2003. Through the diagnosis, the main intervention axis and relevant elements for capacity building within the MEPS have been identified. ▪ Organization of a workshop to share the findings of the diagnosis of the UFLS, and an appeal to the MEPS authorities for greater commitment to efficient management of HIV/AIDS in the education sector and to support the UFLS. This workshop gathered almost all the members of the UFLS of the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education and took place on August 21st 2003 in Porto-Novo.. ▪ Report preparation and submission to USAID on September 30th 2003. |
| <p>UFLS/MEPS function in line with the recommendations for institutional support</p> | <p>From October 1st 2003 till the end of the project</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Engage the authorities of the Ministry (Deputy and Minister) towards the organization of an extraordinary meeting of the UFLS, after 11 months of inactivity. That meeting was held on 27 November 2003, leading to the dissolution of the Governing Board and the Coordination Team of the UFLS on November 28th 2003. ▪ Formulation of a recommendations for institutional reform of the UFLS. This document which is based essentially on the results and diagnosis would help the authorities of MEPS to better formulate the roles and modalities of the future Focal Unit to be set up. ▪ Visits, working sessions and actions were taken vis-à-vis the authorities of the Ministry of Education for the nomination of members to the UFLS. This advocacy had a positive effect as it resulted in the choice of other members for the management of the Unit, with the Coordinator. ▪ Various kinds of support to the UFLS for initiation of activities on the field: (i) training of school supervisors and pedagogical advisors on HIV prevention; (ii) organization of activities relating to the World AIDS Day, organization of a competition on messages and drawings on HIV/AIDS. ▪ Preparation of a summary report and synopsis of the impact study of HIV/AIDS in primary schools in Benin. ▪ Organization of an orientation session for all new members of the UFLS in Porto-Novo on March 24th 2004. |

- Design of UFLS organizational assessment and conduct of the assessment.
- Organization of evaluation and design of quarterly working plan of UFLS for 2005.
- Formulation and validation of draft order taking into account the HIV/AIDS factor in the tools for combating sexual violence in schools.
- Formulation of prerequisites relating to the formulation of a policy document for combating HIV/AIDS in the MEPS: (i) Commitment by the authorities to make the formulation of a policy document for combating HIV/AIDS an integral part of MEPS; (ii) Appropriation of the HIV/AIDS factors in the MEPS policy document by the UFLS members.; (iii) Discussions on the follow-up to the HIV/AIDS policy issues.
- Organization of sessions for the formulation, validation of a list of data to be collected within the context of setting up an Information and Management System on HIV/AIDS within the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education and of a mechanism for the collection, processing, analysis and dissemination of such data.
- Organization of three (03) sessions (October 21st, October 27th and November 15th 2005) for the formulation of an HIV/AIDS policy document for MEPS by an Adhoc Committee.
- Holding of a session on November 17th 2005 on the sustainability of the EQUIPE Project outcomes.
- Support to the UFLS in the implementation of its strategic plan : (i) Organization of a training workshop for members of UFLS/MEPS on indicators and mechanisms for the Monitoring and Evaluation of activities for combating STI/HIV/AIDS in schools in February 2005; (ii) Organization of monthly meetings at the UFLS Office; (iii) Organization of quarterly assessment and planning sessions by the UFLS Assembly and MEPS. (iv) Support to the UFLS members for the sensitization of the staff on STI/HIV/AIDS and the establishment or motivation of Anti-AIDS clubs at the Technical and Central Administrations of MEPS and DDEPS in Ouémé-Plateau and Atlantique Littoral.
- Re-reading sessions of documents produced by UFLS the technical support of EQUIPE Project, and selection for printing (Information Document on activities carried out under the HIV/AIDS CLIN, Summary Report on HIV/AIDS Impact Study on Primary Education in Benin and the 2005-2009 UFLS Strategic Plan).
- Support to the printing of the above documents produced by UFLS/MEPS. In total, five hundred (500) copies each of the documents were printed.

Milestone # 61

Policy dialogue in relation to HIV/AIDS in MEPS has been held with its partners

| | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|--|
| <p>The policy dialogue in relation to HIV/AIDS in MEPS has been held with its partners</p> | <p>June 30th 004</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Tools elaboration: terms of reference and discussion guide for policy element elaboration. These documents were formulated with the full participation of members of the UFLS. ▪ Organization of discussions on HIV/AIDS policy issues in MEPS with regional education stakeholders. 5 regional workshops were organized in the main cities of regions (departments), as well as meetings with officials of the central government. These meetings held in May 2004 helped to mobilize more than 400 stakeholders to deliberate on policy issues relating to HIV/AIDS in the education sector. ▪ Organization of several summary sessions on results from regional workshops. At the end of these sessions the facilitators (from the UFLS/MEPS and EQUIPE Project) of the workshops prepared a list of policy issues selected by the stakeholders and users from the school who were invited to participate in the workshops. ▪ Report preparation and submission to USAID on June 30th 2004. |
| <p>Milestone # 62 The strategic plan and work plans for HIV/AIDS management in the education sector have been formulated</p> | | |
| <p>The strategic plan and work plans for HIV/AIDS management in the education sector have been formulated</p> | <p>December 31st 2004</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pedagogical preparation and design of methodological tools. The issue was to define the general orientations for the conduct of the strategic planning process, the formulation of the terms of reference of the activity and the design of the methodological tools. ▪ Organization of a strategic workshop in October 2004 in Abomey, for the appropriation of the methodological approach by a limited group of ten (10) officials of the MEPS (from the UFLS and the Technical and Central Management units of the MEPS). At the end of the workshop, the strategic orientations and the major actions likely to help the Ministry and its Focal Unit to manage the impact of HIV/AIDS in the education sector were defined. ▪ Organization of a workshop in November 2004 for the formulation of a strategic plan and work plans for UFLS/MEPS. This workshop enabled about 30 persons (members of UFLS, members of regional units of UFLS, members from Federations of Parent-Teacher Associations) to actively participate in the formulation of a strategic plan for combating HIV/AIDS. ▪ Organization of a workshop in November 2004 to harmonize and synthesis strategic plan of the UFLS/MEPS. This limited group started from the conclusions of the two strategic workshops and the formulation of a strategic plan and the UFLS/MEPS work plans. ▪ Finalization of the strategic plan and work plans in November 2005. The exercise involved members of the |

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| | | <p>group that harmonized the strategic plan. All the outputs were subjected to analysis to ensure that the contents are relevant.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Organization of a national workshop to validate the 2005-2009 strategic plan and the UFLS work plans in December 2005 in Cotonou. After suggestions and improvements were made, the documents produced were validated by 60 participants at this workshop, most of whom are stakeholders at different levels of education.▪ Report preparation on the formulation of a strategic plan and UFLS work plans and submission to USAID on December 31st 2004. |
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2. Explanations on unachieved or exceeded results

2.1. Unachieved results

The CLIN 2 is the one that recorded the most unachieved results, for instance i) implementation of the institutional reform of the National Network for the Promotion of Girls Education (RNPSF); (ii) establishment of the directory of girls education stakeholders; and (iii) publishing of the outcomes of the national forum on girls education.

These activities could not be realized were not realized because of the lack of availability and goodwill from the MEPS; others, on the contrary were unsuccessful as a result of certain difficulties inherent to the RNPSF.

Institutional reform

The standstill observed and experienced since the implementation of the institutional reform of the National Network (RNPSF) did not allow the organization of the General Assembly and the adoption of the new legal documents to finalize the reform. Lobbying vis-à-vis the Minister of Education created hope for organizing the general assembly that should legitimate the implementation of the reform, through the adoption of the legal documents of the Network. However, the Minister of Education requested to be given some time to acquaint herself with the drafted texts prior to the Assembly. To date, she has not yet provided the Network with her feedback, nor fix the date of the Assembly, that she has to preside.

Stakeholders directory

The directory of girls education stakeholders could also not be finalized because of the paucity of information collected. Indeed, before, during and after the national forum on girls education, data collection forms for the establishment of this directory were distributed to various stakeholders with the instruction to fill and return them to the network for exploitation. Many of these stakeholders did not complete them nor they provide all the necessary data solicited. If analysis are to be carried out under these conditions, the results would not be useful and relevant.

Forum outcomes

The loss of the hard drive of the computer on which all the information produced by the national forum on girls education was stored by the Network, made it impossible to summarize and disseminate the conclusions of the forum

2.2. Exceeded results

CLIN 5

Under the CLIN 5, the deliverable 60 “The MEPS HIV/AIDS Management Unit is established” exceeded its target. The specificity of this deliverable is that the establishment of a Focal Unit

against HIV/AIDS (UFLS) of the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (MEPS) created in July 2002 by decree No 054/MEPS/CAB/DC/SP comes before the inception of the activities of the project in March 2003.

With the anomaly that characterized the UFLS at the beginning of the project and in order to enable members of the UFLS to carry out their responsibilities efficiently, it became necessary to undertake an institutional diagnosis at the UFLS to analyze the strengths and weaknesses of the focal unit. This is to build an appropriate capacity building plan of members. This exercise was carried out in July 2003 and the outcomes were presented to members of the MEPS management in order to solicit their constant support for the UFLS.

That was the beginning of a new era for the UFLS with the implementation of new decree including : (i) Decree N°007/MEPS/CAB/DC/SP of February 27th 2004 on the designation of a Coordinator for the Focal Unit for Combating Sexually Transmissible Infections and HIV/AIDS in schools ; (ii) Decree No 034/MEPS/CAB/DC/SP of April 5th 2004 on the mandate and operation of Focal Unit for Combating Sexually Transmissible Infections and HIV/AIDS in schools ;(iii) Decree No 111/MEPS/CAB/DC/SP of December 6th 2004 on the nomination of members of the Focal Unit for Combating Sexually Transmissible Infections and HIV/AIDS in schools (iv) memorandum No 1226/MEPS/CAB/DC/SP of December 6th 2004 on the nomination of members of the Focal Unit Assembly.

The adoption of all these decrees helped to provide all the necessary human resources that ensured the realization of the last three deliverables. Once the last deliverable was provided on 31st December 2004 (the formulated Strategic Plan and Work Plans for the UFLS), the year 2005 for the CLIN 5 was devoted to the functioning of the UFLS/MEPS in accordance with the recommendations for its institutional support plan; therefore, the deliverable N° 60 entitled “The MEPS HIV/AIDS Management Unit is established” was achieved and exceeded.

CLIN 3

The EQUIPE Project did not have the mandate, at least under the CLIN 3, to provide grants to targeted communes. Support to the communes was to be limited to the design of education plans and budgets as well as search for partners for funding through the design of an incentive plan. The Project was designed to ensure that the necessary resources for the building, maintenance and equipment of schools should be transferred to the communes by the State, in line with Law No .97-029 of January 15th 1999, on the organization of communes in the Republic of Benin, which has not yet come into effect since then. Therefore, members of the working groups insisted that the EQUIPE Project goes beyond the technical support to include funding aspect for the realization of school infrastructure.

After analyzing of the relevance of the education plans of the communes, the EQUIPE Project made some adjustments to the CLIN 3 budget, to support the most committed and motivated communes by providing small grants contributions to at least one projected activity in their education plan. The COP of EQUIPE advocated for an amendment of the contract with USAID, in that regard.

The conditions for making these grants are simple: the EQUIPE Project gives grants (i) to the targeted communes under CLIN 3 for communes that have put in place an incentive plan, (ii) to communes that had drafted and submitted a micro project for co-financing and (iii) communes that have mobilized at least 50% of the total value of their micro project.

The conditions for making such grants were the subject of a grant policy designed and discussed by the EQUIPE Project with the partner communes. The twenty (20) partner communes were eligible to submit micro projects. Nineteen (19) communes have actually applied. The Micro Project Selection Committee, after three sessions, approved fifteen (15) micro projects for the communes: Kandi, Malanville, Gogounou and Banikoara in Alibori ; Tchaourou, Pèrèrè, Nikki, N'dali and Kalalé in Borgou ; Lokossa in Mono and Lalo, Klouékanmè, Toviklin, Dogbo and Aplahoué in Couffo.

Among these 15 communes, 2 could not continue the funding process. These are N'dali, for failing to mobilize counterpart funding and Kandi for not starting the work until September 2005.

Thirteen (13) communes succeeded in fully implementing the entire process regarding grants. This represents 65% performance.

In addition to the effects the provision of grants made, as outlined in the achievement table above, the introduction of grants facilitated setting up of transparent fund management procedures and development of resources mobilization abilities.

3. Success stories

3.1. Good Governance as intervention strategy

After the design of plans and working tools, the CLIN 3 had to choose its sites of intervention. The challenge has been to execute it as transparently as possible without any partisan or political consideration. To achieve that objective, the facilitators of the CLIN proposed the setting up of a representative committee for selection of the sites on competitive basis, based on criteria to be validated by the communes.

Below is the reaction of the commune of Kandi after the reporting back session on the process of selection of criteria by the communes. « The EQUIPE Project through its EAA section gave us a lesson on the voluntary commitment to enter into partnership or not with institutions depending on whether the set objectives are similar or different. It gave us a good appreciation of governance by the clear procedures adopted for the selection of the communes. We hope that this section will continue in the same way to address the remaining challenges. »

3.2. The experience of education working groups must be capitalized

To carry out the activities on the field, the strategy for the EAA section was to work through working groups on education to be established in each commune. The creation of a working group by commune brought the following questions from local education stakeholders: will this working group not be another additional institution? Will there not be conflicts of mandates with the Coordination of Parent-Teacher Associations which had hitherto been the civil society institution in charge of the management of education issues within the commune? Are the newly established Councils in the communes not going to usurp all the powers and marginalize other civil society organizations in the management of education, since none of the articles in the decentralization Law No 97-029 of January 15th 1999 related to the organization of communes in Benin specify clearly their role in this area

To avoid these risks, CLIN 3 designed and submitted terms of reference of the working committees for consideration by the selection committee and the communes involved. These terms of reference were amended and validated by the Committees and then by the beneficiary communes during the social negotiation workshops on project intervention.

The working groups were established in the 20 partner communes. A testimony given by the Head of Primary Education Service (C/SEP) of Borgou-Alibori : « We had fears during the launching of the EAA CLIN activities in our departments in July 2003 ; we were asking ourselves whether this new body called the working group was relevant and whether it was going to work. But today, we are happy, because in our communes, as Heads of School Constituencies (CCS), teachers, members of the PTAs, other institutions and civil society organizations and members of the local government authorities meet on a common platform to deliberate on problems with the view to finding solutions for education at the local level. This approach adopted in the EAA CLIN is laudable and needs to be replicated in other communes. »

3.3. Communities are prepared to play their part

In the course of the design of the incentive plan for the commune, there was the need to appreciate the contribution of each identified institution. In that regard, a farmer in Gogounou declared that: « We can increase our part to 50%, our reward being an increase in the success rate of our children ».

3.4. Last-minute grant thanks to the commitment of the two partners

The Lalo commune was absent on two occasions to the regional workshops for finalization of the implementation and evaluation of the incentive plans for the communes. In spite of the reminder sent by the Chief of Party of EQUIPE to the Mayor of Lalo, no response was given. The facilitators of the EAA CLIN, advised by the CoP, met the Secretary General and the Head of the community development service. The Secretary General explained the difficulties faced at the working group in the commune and promised to brief the Mayor about the outcome of that meeting and pledged to revitalize the working group.

After this meeting, work proceeded around the clock: Lalo used internet to send the awaited incentive plans, including some sensitive documents on micro projects and sent the Head of the Local Development Department the following day to deposit a hard copy of the micro project document in the EQUIPE Office in Porto-Novvo. Lalo is thus the first and only commune among the twenty partners to have used this new information technology within the context of the EAA - Communes Partnership.

Thus, Lalo which was granted access, in spite of its handicap, caught up with some communes and even outclassed them as the latter communes did not even present a micro project. In fact, out of 13 communes that benefited from project grants, Lalo was the only commune that was the first to complete its project and sent flawless supporting documents.

3.5. Battle won by the Malanville working Group

The commune of Malanville benefited from a module of 3 classes in addition to an office and a store. To reach this stage, it took a strong leadership of the working group, which understood right away its role in decision-making. Right from the beginning, the Mayor made it clear that the commune did not have the financial resources to pay the counterpart funds. The working group then asked him to sign the grant convention with the project and that the group will mobilize funds. The working group then undertook a broad awareness raising program among the beneficiary communities and private operators. The outcome was that the Parent and Teacher Associations mobilized substantial resources, that motivated the Commune Council to provide resources. The counterpart funds have been mobilized and the class module could be built.

When the second installment of the EQUIPE Project grant was paid, the Mayor congratulated all the members of the working group for their patience and determination in convincing him for the execution and completion of the project. He said: “..... All those who spoke thanked the Mayor for the precious thing that had realized. I rather think that the appreciation should be given to members of the working group who were not only able to convince me for the realization of the module but also mobilized the Parent Teacher Associations for the contribution of the necessary resources as counterpart funds. I would like this working group to continue in the same direction and to put pressure on me for all development activities of the commune ...”

Today, transfer of resources by the central government to communes is not yet given; only internal resource mobilization can help the communes to meet their needs. In addition, every commune should have competent persons for lobbying decision-makers

3.6. There is definitely another dimension in combating HIV/AIDS

It is an open secret that HIV/AIDS is part of the most shameful and fearful diseases especially in schools where stigmatization is practiced. This situation compels many teachers and other education workers and authorities to hide their HIV/AIDS status.

After several discussions that took place at workshops on HIV/AIDS policy issues in Primary and Secondary Schools, most of the participants declared as follows: « It is through EQUIPE

Project that we realize there are other sides of combating HIV/AIDS, especially in the education sector. The opportunities of care and support, job security, confidentiality, non stigmatization and non discrimination that can be given to an HIV positive or AIDS patient if implemented by our State, would facilitate openness and remove the unwillingness to declare one's status. »

3.7. Women's Commitment and Desire in educating the girl child

During a field visit of the CLIN 2.2., the Chairperson of the Students Mothers Associations (AME) of Yanda village in the Zakpota commune declares as follows: « We use to show solidarity in things that are often less important but we have never thought that this solidarity could and should be extended to the education of our girls and for the improvement of the situation of our localities. »

This testimony comes to prove the opportunities brought in some communities by the introduction of Students Mothers Associations (AME) which today is supporting the Parent Teacher Associations in the management of problems in schools, such as access and retention, especially for girls. The availability of women and their commitment are visible on the field, once they understand the importance of girl child education. The Chairperson continued: « We refuse to keep our girls victims of our ignorance and illiteracy ».

4. Summary of progress made in achieving indicator targets during the program

Under the *CLIN 3*, all the twenty (20) communes have finalized and implemented their plans for incentives. The evaluation of the implementation of these incentive plans, realized with a tool proposed by the Project, discussed, amended and adopted by the working group representatives, showed the following results:

- ❖ Civil society organizations and private sector, such as the NGOs, the Communal Unions of Producers, Parent Teacher Associations, are increasingly involved in the identification, planning and budgeting of education activities in the communes;
 - ❖ Communal decision-makers, local donors, education authorities at local level and beneficiaries easily communicate and collaborate with each other and they rally their efforts to promote quality education;
 - ❖ The mobilization of material, financial and human resources for the sake of educational services is easier because there is a conducive climate of confidence among various stakeholders in education;
 - ❖ The educational plans are implemented in all the 20 communes. The activities that are mostly implemented are: awareness raising on enrolment of children, especially girls, recruitment and training of community teachers, building of classes, construction of latrines and provision of school furniture;
 - ❖ The implementation of incentives, if it has not helped in achieving all the expected results because of the fact that it is the very first year that the implementation is being done in the four areas envisaged, it has however helped to effect qualitative changes that augur well for a better future in terms of funding and management of schools. The
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assessment of the implementation of incentives was done by educational stakeholders themselves; these stakeholders can speak easily about the content of their educational plan, activities envisaged, various contributions expected and the institutions that will govern the various activities. It was found out during the assessment of incentives that all stakeholders have identified and questioned institutions which have not properly achieved their results. Communal decision-makers have been held accountable for the result of the implementation of education plans. This has been made possible today, and one can witness the democratization of education debate, and a better involvement of civil society organizations and the private sector in planning for education. The mayor of the commune of N'dali in the district of Borgou says that : «We are aware of the fact that in the context of decentralization, we have a development administration and not a commanding administration. We re-state that education is our battle horse. However, priorities are only numerous and the communes lack resources. »

- ❖ For the first year of implementation of incentives, according to the information gathered during their assessment, civil society organizations and private sector in the twenty (20) communes mobilized 343,515,141 Fcfa and 1,342 people for education, in addition to material supply. This financial contribution represents 2.39% of the 14,315,261,517 Fcfa needed to successfully carry out the activities in the education plans of the 20 communes for 4 years, and 9.59% of 3,578,815,379 Fcfa needed each year to undertake these activities. The difference is indeed huge, but effort to date is remarkable especially in the context of economic deCLINE that Benin is experiencing.
- ❖ Thirteen (13) out of the twenty (20) partner communes were able to mobilize 71,948,071 Fcfa representing 54.66% of 131,626,058 Fcfa that was needed for the setting up of educational infrastructure.

At the level of *CLIN 5*, the following progress is noted:

- ❖ The state of lethargy in which UFLS/MEPS was found at the beginning of the project with the holding of no meetings and no activities on the field, is now overcome.
- ❖ UFLS/MEPS constitutes, through the reinforcement of the EQUIPE Project, a reference to national and international plans in addition to the dynamism of their members, the prospective and overall approach to the management of the impact of HIV/AIDS on its targets (teachers, pupils and administrative staff of the MEPS).
- ❖ UFLS/MEPS is one of the rare UFLS set up within various ministries to have planned and carried out to completion the development of important working instruments such as the realization of HIV/AIDS impact assessment studies on education.

5. Lessons learnt and recommendations

5.1. Lessons learnt

Lessons learnt during the 3 years of implementation have been:

- When communities are committed to work out a challenge, they take advantage on all opportunity to do it. Women, who have for a long time been marginalized in life and in the management of schools have become, in the target areas, with the implementation of Student Mothers Associations model, privileged partners of teachers who prefer collaborating with them, rather than Parent Teacher Associations largely dominated by men and which are dormant in some areas;
- Today, in the areas of intervention of RNPSF, a challenge is rather means to maintain and ensure the performance of girls in school. Most of parents make to enroll their girls in school; however, limited infrastructures and strikes is an obstacle that decrease again the motivation of parents;
- Groups that have the same interests but do not succeed in coming together to reflect on issues, can do it if a regulatory framework is defined and established by members. This is the case of the working group on education composed of several institutions intervening in local education, a group within which we find decision-makers, technicians and donors of the system. Their collaboration is necessary, even indispensable, but was not effective, in absence of a space of planning and discussion;
- Communities were used to seeing their names on lists of beneficiaries of a project. With the EAA CLIN, this has changed. Were beneficiaries of the CLIN, communes that show our interest to work with the project and to demonstrate previous and future capabilities and potentials. This strategy on the basis of motivation was well received by the communities;
- The willingness of Mayors and the other local representatives, the profile of the human resources of the various services and institutions of a commune and the level of material and financial resources are key in the development of communes. All these factors combined explain the difference in development rhythm of communes. While some look forward to benefiting from the presence of project to truly improve upon the local education system, other communes are lagging behind;
- The issue of HIV/AIDS in a sector as strategic as education is, goes far beyond simple interventions of awareness creation and/or the care of infected persons;
- The control of the propensity of HIV/AIDS depends on the capacity of the overall management of this pandemic in the education system.

5.2. Recommendations

In the light of the challenges that the institutional reform of RNPSF is going through, the implementation of educational plans in the partner communes and the implementation of the strategic plan of UFLS of MEPS, the following recommendations can be formulated:

- *For the Mayors*
 - local authorities must be aware of their role in the life of the school and therefore bring in all the support needed for the school constituency in its mission, and do not exclude it in decision-making;
 - Mayors, local representatives, members of working groups and other stakeholders in education at communal level continue to implement incentive plans in order to mobilize internal resources needed for the implementation of education plans;
 - Mayors to be endowed with technical services in charge of the design and monitoring of micro projects for the setting up of school infrastructure and build the capacities of their staff with that regard;
 - Communes, individually or in groups, through the National Association of Communes of Benin (ANCB), to advocate for the transfer of education resources to communes.
- *For the authorities of the central government*
 - The situation of RNPSF to be clarified at the level of MEPS for the redefinition of the mission of this structure, and share is with various stakeholders of the education system;
 - The procedure for issuing birth certificates, especially in the rural areas, to be reviewed to avoid delays that prevent some children to be ready for the Primary Degree Certificate Examination when they get to the final year of primary school;
 - The skills and the resources needed for construction, equipment and repairs of public institutions of primary and nursery education to be transferred to the communes in accordance with Law N° 97-029 of January 15th 1999, on the organization of communes in the Republic of Benin;
 - The management of the MEPS to work for the effective functioning of all decentralized institutions of UFLS: departmental and local agencies (School and College districts) and anti-AIDS clubs;
 - The needed resources to be mobilized for the implementation of education strategic plans 2006-2009;
 - The policy document of MEPS against HIV/AIDS to be finalized and validated;
 - The MIS (Management Information System) of the MEPS on HIV/AIDS to be installed and operational.

Conclusion

The sub-contractor, CARE, has made efforts during the three years of the implementation of the EQUIPE Project to achieve all the results agreed upon with the contractor, CAII. During the implementation, CARE even went beyond the implementation of some activities, such as the grants in that the intervening communes under CLIN 3 were, and, with the support of the Chief of Party, looked for alternatives to activities that were at standstill, due to external factors. Various bodies have been empowered: RNPSF, UFLS/MEPS and the working groups at

communes level, acquired capacities and could play their part in the improvement of the quality of education.

These various successes do not however make us lose sight of the fact that challenges still are numerous for these institutions. These challenges are:

- The accomplishment of the process of institutional reform of the National Network for the Promotion of Girl Child Education. We expect the Authorities of the Ministry to give approval for the holding of the General Assembly thus making the RNPSF an Organization typical of the Law of 1901 ;
- The continuation of the implementation of the educational plans on incentives by the partner communes;
- The continuation of the experiment by the communes in involving working groups in the management of education at the local level;
- The organization by all the communes, under the leadership of the 20 communes empowered, of advocacy activities with the central government for the transfer of education resources to communes;
- The continuation by UFLS/MEPS of the implementation of the strategic plan against HIV/AIDS.

At this end of the EQUIPE Project, it is up to the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (MEPS) and its decentralized structures, to consolidate and sustain the outcomes of the project, and capitalize all of its successful experiences. All the successes, the failures and the challenges will, perhaps, constitute for USAID, MEPS, CAII and CARE, important database for future programming.

Annex 2. EMI SYSTEMS Final Report

Overall Results of EMI Systems' Work in Benin Under EQUIPE Clin 4

Sub-IR 1. Appropriate planning and monitoring tools developed and used

Information Systems, Planning and monitoring tools

EMI Systems developed an integrated approach to planning, management and monitoring of the education system, supported by a methodology and software applied at all levels of the system. The core of the approach is the development of information and knowledge systems based on education and demographic data which can support strategic planning, improved allocation of financial, human and information resources, improved school infrastructure, and policy dialog at the national and departmental level.

The principles of the EMI Systems' intervention were:

1. *Work in close cooperation with the other CLINs of EQUIPE and MEPS (in particular with DPP)*
2. *Combine the quantitative, more technical approach, with a participative approach involving all the key stakeholders at each level of the education system, in recognition of the limitations of quantitative analysis, and of the reliability of reported data.*
3. *Show sensitivity to, and understanding of, the local culture by proposing solutions that can be absorbed, accepted and applied in a sustainable way*
4. *Develop user-friendly solutions and automated procedures, in order to insure absorption and continuous use of planning tools by MEPS and DDEPS staff*
5. *Provide interactive hands-on training of MEPS and DDEPS/SOSP staff*

3.1. Summary of Consultants interventions for Information Systems, Planning and monitoring tools (Mircea Enache, Aniela Ghita)

- Developed an instrument to support decision-making (MapDecision MEPS Benin), based on the most recent MEPS basic education data for three years: 2001-2002, 2002-2003 and 2003-2004. The possibility of attaching further school years was also provided. See the illustration below.

MapDecision for MEPS Benin presents special facilities, such as:

1. French or English menus
-

2. Customized Analytical Reports (titles and subtitles at user's choice...)
3. Passwords for the protected operations (all passwords are given in the Annex3- Technical Report)
4. All-in-one package (software, the Data and Indicators, Analytical Procedures, the Archives with the Statistical Yearbooks). Total space on the installation CD is 500 MB.
5. Easy installation of the software (launching **Setup.exe** from the installation CD)
6. Help and User Manual in French
7. All the indicators and their descriptions are translated in French

MapDecision incorporates several modules, as presented below:

- **Source Data Processing Module**- the original MEPS/DPP source data files (files dbf)
- **Analytical Framework** - based on maps and indicators at DDEPS and CS level, with focus on EQF normes. For an easy access to the data, the indicators are grouped in Classes (Categories). A class contains similar variables (for example in class BATIMENT are variables concerning the situation of buildings: type of building, building materials etc).

The classes and number of the analytical indicators of MapDecision are:

| | CATEGORIE | Nombre d'indicateurs MEPS par 77 Communes | Nombre d'indicateurs MEPS par 6 Départements | Nombre d'indicateurs chaque DDEPS par Communes | Nombre d'indicateurs Carte Scolaire |
|----|---------------------------|---|--|--|---|
| 1 | GENERALE | 3 | 3 | 3 | 9 |
| 2 | RECENSEMENT | 9 | 9 | 9 | 15 |
| 3 | ECOLES | 9 | 9 | 9 | - |
| 4 | ENVIRONN_SCOL | 12 | 12 | 12 | - |
| 5 | CLASSES | 4 | 4 | 4 | 9 |
| 6 | MOBILIER | 4 | 4 | 4 | 9 |
| 7 | BATIMENT | 7 | 7 | 7 | 15 |
| 8 | ELEVES | 23 | 23 | 23 | 32 |
| 9 | ENSEIGNANTS | 34 | 34 | 34 | 33 |
| 10 | EXAMEN | 6 | 6 | 6 | 2 |
| 11 | EQF | 12 | 12 | 12 | - |
| 12 | AUTRES EQF | 28 | 28 | 28 | - |
| 13 | RENDEMENT | 27 | 27 | 27 | 27 |
| 14 | SCOLARISATION | 6 | 6 | 6 | - |
| 15 | FRAIS | - | - | - | 9 |
| 16 | EQ_PEDAGOGIQUE | - | - | - | 38 |
| | TOTAL INDICATORS : | 184 | 184 | 184 | 198 |

- An additional module of the **automatic integration of the future school years** in analytical framework **and production of the new Statistical Yearbooks**. Improved the data collection and reporting system by developing automatic queries to automatically produce the Statistical Yearbooks published by DPP. The complete Statistical Yearbooks of the MEPS and the 6 DDEPS form a booklet of 132 pages (without diagrams) and 275 pages (with diagrams). MapDecision makes possible to regenerate the Statistical Yearbooks automatically if the data are changed.
 - **An additional module of the automatic integration of the new school years in the Carte Scolaire and Map editing module**. The module produces indicators of the Carte Scolaire of Natitingou. Moreover, it allows adding new schools, moving them or removing them from the map.
 - An additional **module of Exchange of the Data**. The module allows transferring the data between various users in MEPS and DDEPS. The new source data given, new indicators, new Annuaires or the new Carte Scolaire can be sent or received in a simple way.
 - An additional module of integration with the application of Budget and export of the data. A number of 56 new indicators can be sent towards the CLIN4/Budget software.
- Developed a school map pilot in *circonscription scolaire* (CS) Natitingou in Atacora Department, based on detailed education data and locational information on primary schools. The results of the school map will contribute to an improved management of the education system at the local level, in the context of decentralization, and to the development of local education plans. They will also be a model for optimizing the network and infrastructure of schools, and will contribute quality by linking the FQL norms to planning. See below the Carte Scolaire illustrating in three colors the distribution of students per teacher ratio (the FQL norm is being of 50).
 - **Designed and developed the automated Statistical Yearbooks (with Excel charts) for each level (MEPS and the six DDEPS) for 2001-2002, 2002-2003 and 2003-2004. See Annex 3 for more details on the content of the Statistical Yearbooks.**
 - Developed and incorporated into MapDecision an archive containing:
 - Analytical outputs (MapDecision analytical maps in Html format) and a navigating interface for two years: 2001-2002 and 2002-2003
 - Statistical Yearbooks of MEPS and six DDEPS for the years 2001-2002, 2002-2003 and 2003-2004
 - Auxiliary Databases, such as Census Socio-Economic Data

The analytical maps were also uploaded on the homepage of www.emisystems.com site, for further consultation. The visitor should select the **EQUIPE Benin** link, then enter the password: “*equipeequipe*”
 - Provided training in use of the instruments for decision-making (MapDecision MEPS and MapDecision Carte Scolaire)
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During the fourth visit (April 2004), the two consultants installed the tool MapDecision Carte Scolaire and perform preliminary training and/or presentations to DDEPS/SOSP Atacora-Donga, C/CS Natitingou, Natitingou school directors. Short exposures were performed to the Mayor of Natitingou Commune and President of Association de Parents.

During the fifth visit (October 2004), the two consultants installed the tool MapDecision for MEPS Benin and performed a 3-days training to 32 officials from MEPS and DDEPS.

During the sixth visit (February-March 2005), the two consultants incorporated the third school year (2003-2004) and installed the final version MapDecision for MEPS Benin. Also they performed the second 3-days training to 35 officials from MEPS and DDEPS.

- Delivered Hardware Equipment for MEPS

To better support the intervention of project EQUIPE, the consultants Ghita and Enache also delivered computer equipment to the MEPS/DPP and to the DDEPS/SOSP of Atacora-Donga (laptops, printers, video projectors, Windows XP, MS Office...) in March 2004. See the list below:

MEPS/DPP (equipment for analysis, reporting and publishing the Statistical Yearbooks and *Rapport d'Analyse*)

- Desktop computer (Pentium 4)
- Scanner A4, color
- Color laser printer A4
- Laptop (Pentium)
- Video projector VGA
- Microsoft Office Professional
- Document binding system
- Supplies (cartridges, paper A4, blank CDs, blank diskettes, 2 power strips, etc)
- Power APC

DDEPS/SOSP Atacora-Donga

- Laptop (Pentium)
- Microsoft Office Professional
- Video projector VGA (SONY)
- Ink-jet color printer with USB cable
- Supplies (cartridges for the printer, paper A4, blank CDs, blank diskettes, 1 power strip)

- Interacted with CLIN3 component and performed several interactive exercises on Plan d'Action Communal and Plan d'Action Départemental
- Performed interactive exercises on *Carte Scolaire*

Success Stories

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- **The presentations of the information system, and the planning and monitoring tools in the Atacora Department and Natitingou school district (*circonscription scolaire* - CS) were received with equal interest by all local education officials and school directors, and many discussions were held regarding the use of the *carte scolaire pilote* and the data collection. Possibly the most important achievement locally was that school directors saw the usefulness of the data which they are routinely required to provide, and which currently does not provide them any feedback at all. When they realized that the data they provide could be returned to them together with user-friendly instruments for analysis, planning and monitoring of schools in a participatory framework, the school directors became very interested in data quality, timely collection and in contributing to the improvement of the data in general.**
- **The conclusion of CLIN 4 team (Edgar Sasse and Expedit Mensah) during the follow-up visit (December 2004), is that in Natitingou the *Carte Scolaire* tool was used on daily basis.**
- **The C/CS in Natitingou (Mr. Gaston Tolo) and his deputy (Mr. Blaise Agossa) said the MapDecision tool would not only offer an objective data for resource allocation to the schools in Natitingou, but also means for accountability, local initiatives and cooperation in a way which they have already been doing, albeit without data and planning tools. He also said that MapDecision allows school directors to improve the quality and reliability of the data they are reporting to MEPS.**
- During the October Training at Abomey Calavi, Mr. ODUSHINA David, Cabinet Technical Counselor for MEPS (later Director of Human Resources) showed much interest in MapDecision and participated to the training from the beginning to the end. Also, during the March 2005 training at Abomey Calavi, the MEPS/DPP, DES, DIP and DIVI Directors showed same special interest.
- During the second training, Mr. Bienvenue Marcos, EQUIPE Consultant said: “ *Cet outil est merveilleux!* “. He was invited in the 3rd day of training to conduct an interactive illustrative exercise. All the participants used the MapDecision analytical procedures they just have learned about in previous days and discovered the priority problems of each DDEPS (mainly the problems were related to school environment, qualified teachers, student results and girls participation rate).

Sub IR 2 Improved Financial Management

Ministry Validation of Financial Management Tools and Policies

The Financial Consultant (Hedi Zaiem) met with the local EQUIPE staff to discuss the results of the visits made by EQUIPE in the departments in relation with the use of the Tool for Budgets and Financial management.

The Financial Consultant integrated the improvements and modifications proposed by the users and developed an audio-visual user manual which allows a faster and more complete mastering of the software.

A validation seminar was organized for March 1, 2005 at the 15 Janvier hotel. The participants included the main officers of MEPS, several DDEPS and several C/CS. The Seminar allowed the Consultant to note the observations made by the participants on the contents of the proposed final reports. The Final Report responds to these observations.

The Financial Consultant provided a half-day of training in the use of the financial planning and budget tools on Friday, March 2005.

The objectives of the EQUIPE Project for the financial management are:

- Improving the budget procedures in order to increase the execution of the investment budget of MEPS and attain the expected results every year.
- Implementing plans and budgets to achieve the projected results at the central and departmental levels.

The Financial Consultant's recommendations are focused in two directions:

- Improving and reorienting the efficiency of central administration (MEPS)
- Enforcing deconcentration and achieving decentralization

Regarding **the use of the tool for budgets and financial management**, the Financial Consultant recommended the following:

- The utilization of the tools and instruments developed by EMI Systems may be left with the CCS if they are given the means, the equipment and the training needed for that. Since the applications are not a daily routine rather quarterly or annual exercises, the Consultant recommends the assistance of the *Cellule de Planification* of the DDEPS.
 - The use of simple but powerful planning tools should allow the deconcentrated and decentralized structures to achieve increased levels of demand and to attract more resources, both internal and external, to primary education.
 - Starting with the simulations developed with the assistance of the planning and budgeting tools developed by EMI Systems, each CS must present a Framework for Mid-Term Expenses (*Cadre de Dépenses à Moyen Terme* - CDMT) for 3-5 years which should include:
 - a summary of the main indicators of the Circumscription
 - a presentation of the objectives to achieve by mid-term
 - a projection of the means needed to achieve the objectives
 - The Framework for Mid-Term Expenses must be aggregated upwards to the DDEPS level and utilized in two main directions:
 - They must be presented at the Annual Conference of DDEPS for budget preparation.
 - They must be presented to an assembly of donors invited by the MEPS officials to an Annual Conference to make sure that resources are made available for the education sector and to coordinate those resources.
-

Sub IR 3 Improved Administration

Ministry Validation the Decentralization Policy and Plan

Proposals for the MEPS institutional development were discussed during the validation seminar organized on the March 1st 2005. The Seminar was supposed to answer the following questions:

- Which programs and activities could be effectively realized ?
- Which programs and activities might be modified and how ?
- Which programs and activities might be discarded and why ?
- Which programs and activities might be added and why ?
- Which are the priorities, the most important programs ?
- How could be financed these programs ?

The seminar was prepared together with Mr. Calixte Cossi and Mr. Bienvenu Marcos, consultants of the EQUIPE Project for the CLIN 4. Mr. Marcos conceived, as well, a summary of the institutional development plan, which was send to the participants, together with the invitation letter.

The conclusions of the seminar. The participants appreciated the consultants' work and approved the most of the programs and activities proposals, with minor amendments (especially rephrasing). The changed proposed by the groups will be commented and introduced in the reviewed Institutional Development Plan, which will be attached at this report.

The general conclusion was that the Development Plan has to be realized and that this is an issue of political willingness. The whole group underlined the idea that the decentralization process is dynamic and all these programs and activities are stages, or steps, followed by other activities and programs, having in mind the present and, mostly the future development needs. Thus, the realization of these programs and activities is only a phase within the institutional development of the educational system.

Final Recommendations

MEPS Source Data Availability

MapDecision is a robust and flexible instrument developed to meet MEPS requirements in friendliness and automation level. It is the result of the consultants' collaboration with MEPS/DPP and EQUIPE/CLIN 4 over a period of more than 2 years.

However, its high level of data automation for the next years' integration requires a stable structure of the source MEPS data. The MapDecision unique source data was the DPP/SSGI nation-wide statistical data, based on Fiches d'Enquete Statistiques, with a given structure (received from DPP/Adj- Mr. Honore Dewanou). MEPS/DPP officials (DPP, DPP/A and C/SSGI) stated from the beginning of the project that the structure of statistical data would remain unchanged, so that they could benefit from MapDecision data automation power. Besides, MEPS data from three consecutive school years and having the same structure are included now in MapDecision.

At the final delivery moment (March 2005) MapDecision incorporates three school years (as indicators on different level of aggregation and as Statistical Yearbooks), processed also in 184 indicators:

-2001-2002

-2002-2003

-2003-2004 (pre-final data version)

For future years, as long as the original structures of the above 12 .dbf files remain unchanged, all the indicators necessary for the analytical framework will be automatically produced and could be saved and/or exchanged (as illustrated in training sessions and in documentation). The same feature is available for the Statistical Yearbooks, which are included in the Data Archive of the software.

What happens if MEPS source data structure changes in the future?

A) If changes in structure mean adding new fields (new variables) while the existing structure remains untouched:

MapDecision **will generate correctly:**

- the existing 184 indicators for each level (MEPS and DDEPS)
- the existing 198 indicators for Carte Scolaire Natitingou
- and also the Statistical Yearbooks

but **the new variables will be ignored** (*but without altering the other variables*) until necessary adjustments would be made on part of the MapDecision internal queries and tabulations, so that new indicators would be included. Further adjustments are necessary in order to get the new structure completed.

B) If changes in structure mean dropping or modifying the names of one or more existing fields
MapDecision **will generate correctly** all the indicators, but those **based on the vanished/modified fields will be empty (treated as Missing Data)**. Further adjustments are necessary in order to get the new structure.

C) If changes in structure mean modifying the existing codification interpretation

MapDecision will not execute correctly that particular part of computation and there is a great risk of obtaining distorted indicators. Further adjustments are necessary in order to restore the initial structure.

D) If changes in structure mean appearing unusual codifications (such as Code 0) by mistake or unknown additional codes

MapDecision will ignore all unexpected or unusual codes (such as code 0), unless their meaning and interpretation will be sent to us in order to make proper adjustments.

Computing the Promotion, Drop-Out and Repeating Rates

The formulas taken from the DPP (see below) use the enrolment source data for two consecutive school years (at start of the year moment).

$$\text{Taux de Promotion CI (t-1)} = \left[\frac{\text{Effectif CP(t)} - \text{Redoublants CP(t)}}{\text{Effectif CI(t-1)}} \right] * 100$$

$$\text{Taux de Promotion CM2 (t-1)} = \left[\frac{\text{Nombre d'admis au CEP (t-1)}}{\text{Effectif CM2 (t-1)}} \right] * 100$$

$$\text{Taux de Redoublement CI (t-1)} = \left[\frac{\text{Redoublants CI (t)}}{\text{Effectif CI (t-1)}} \right] * 100$$

$$\text{Taux d'Abandon CI (t-1)} = 1 - [\text{Taux Promotion CI (t-1)} + \text{Taux de Redoublement CI (t-1)}]$$

However, these formulas are based on the assumption that all the promoted students in T-1 will enrol in the next year (T), which is not entirely true, since the reality shows that part of promoted students transfer to other school (private or public). We recommend adjusting the actual formulas accordingly. Meanwhile, MapDecision allows the user to manually adjust the values of these computed rates, if necessary.

If more indicators are needed

The users have the flexibility of inserting (either manually or through import) additional indicators (for example Students per Teacher ratio in Private schools) at their choice. All the new indicators will appear into a separate Class named ADDITIONEL. They can be manipulated equally and deleted anytime. All the operations on Data/Indicators are illustrated in the documentation.

Annex 3. List of Contract Modifications

| NO | DATE | EXPLANATION |
|----|---------------|--|
| 1 | Sept 15, 2003 | The purpose of this modification is to increase the obligated amount by \$3,500,000 to reach \$5,320,000. |
| 2 | Dec 12, 2003 | The purpose of this modification is to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Under Modification No. 1, remove \$500,000 from incremental funding of \$3,500,000; ▪ Under Modification No. 1, remove \$20,000 identified as pre-Award expense; ▪ Add under this Modification, \$520,000 as increased activity under CLINS 001 and 002; ▪ Increase the total amount of the contract by \$1,984,944 from \$8,359,927 to \$10,344,871; ▪ Revise the contract line item amounts under contract Section A and Section B.4 (Price Schedule); ▪ Revise the deliverables table and delivery schedule in Section F.2; ▪ Update Key Personnel list in Section F.6 to reflect current Key Personnel; ▪ Add reporting requirements on Participant Training and Foreign Taxes. |
| 3 | Feb 24, 2004 | The purpose of this modification is to correct errors in contract modification no. 2. Corrections are in the delivery schedule in Section F.2 and in the Performance Milestone Fee Plan in Section J. |
| 4 | June 25, 2004 | The purpose of this modification is to revise contract indirect rates in accordance with the December 30, 2003 NICRA. |
| 5 | Aug 5, 2004 | The purpose of this modification is to change due dates of the three deliverables related to the second pedagogical evaluation |
| 6 | Aug 10, 2004 | The purpose of this modification is to incrementally fund the contract by \$2,600,000 million to cover project expenditures through August 31, 2005. As a result, the total obligated amount is increased from \$5,320,000 to \$7,920,000. |
| 7 | Feb 14, 2005 | The purpose of this modification is to authorize a small matching grants program under the contract. As a result, the total estimated contract cost remains unchanged at \$10,344,871. |
| 8 | July 12, 2005 | The purpose of this modification is to incrementally fund the contract by \$2,424,871 to fully fund the contract through February 3, 2006. |
| 9 | Aug 24, 2005 | The purpose of this modification is to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Revise the deliverables tables in Section F to i) eliminate five deliverables; ii) change the wording for five deliverables; iii) change the delivery date for six deliverables; ▪ Revise the contract price schedule in Section B. |

| | | |
|----|--------------|--|
| 10 | Dec 22, 2005 | The purpose of this modification is to allow 10% flexibility within contract line item amounts. The total estimated contract cost and total amount obligated remain unchanged at \$10,344,871. |
| 11 | Jan 21, 2006 | The purpose of this modification is to extend the end date of the contract for two months, from February 3, 2006 to April 3, 2006. As a result, total estimated cost remains unchanged. |