



**Quarterly Report:**

# **Basic Education Support and Training Project (BEST)**

**April to June 2008**



**Submitted by:**

**Academy for Educational Development**

*3rd  
Quarterly Report*

**Submission: 31 July 2008**

## Table of Contents

<b>List of Acronyms</b>	2
<b>Overview</b>	3
Background Statement	3
BEST Mission and Objectives	4
<b>Administration and Operations</b>	5
BEST-Yemen Project Registration Completed	5
Presence of BEST-Yemen Project in the Ministry of Education	5
Project Staffing Accelerated	5
Security Measures in Place	6
Teamwork and Capacity Building Underway	6
Transition Management Plan Implemented	7
BEST Project Human Resources	8
Donor and Other Organizational Contacts	8
Joint Basic Education Project Recognition and BEST Project Launch	9
<b>Technical Approach: Themes, Activities, Challenges, Accomplishments and Lessons Learned</b>	9
Completion and Approval of Detailed Work Plan	9
Progress in the Selection of Governorates	10
Training Activities	10
Community Participation Activities	13
EMIS Workshop in Cairo	15
<b>Statement of Work and Challenges for Subsequent Quarters</b>	15
Key Events and Deliverables	15
Challenges	16

## List of Acronyms

<b>AED</b>	Academy for Educational Development
<b>AL</b>	Adult Literacy
<b>AWP</b>	Annual Work Plan
<b>BE</b>	Basic Education Project
<b>BEST</b>	Basic Education Support and Training Project
<b>BEDS</b>	Basic Education Development Strategy
<b>COE</b>	College of Education
<b>COP</b>	Chief of Party
<b>CP</b>	Community Participation
<b>CPF</b>	Community Participation Facilitator
<b>DCOP</b>	Deputy Chief of Party
<b>DOE</b>	District Office of Education
<b>EFA</b>	Education for All
<b>EMIS</b>	Education Management Information System
<b>FC</b>	Fathers' Council
<b>FFS</b>	Fully Functioning School
<b>GOV</b>	Governorate
<b>GOY</b>	Government of Yemen
<b>ICT</b>	Information Communications Technology
<b>MC</b>	Mothers' Council
<b>M&amp;E</b>	Monitoring and Evaluation
<b>MFC</b>	Mothers and Fathers Council
<b>MFS</b>	Minimally Functioning School
<b>MOE</b>	Ministry of Education
<b>MPC</b>	Multipurpose Center
<b>NGO</b>	Non-Governmental Organization
<b>PC</b>	Parent Council
<b>PMP</b>	Performance Monitoring Plan
<b>SSW</b>	School Social Worker
<b>STTA</b>	Short Term Technical Assistant
<b>TTI</b>	Teacher Training Institute
<b>TEP</b>	Teacher Education Programs
<b>ToT</b>	Trainer of Trainers
<b>UNESCO</b>	United Nations Educational, Scientific & Cultural Organization
<b>UNICEF</b>	United Nations International Children's Fund
<b>USAID</b>	United States Agency for International Development
<b>WB</b>	World Bank
<b>WP</b>	Work Plan

**USAID/YEMEN BASIC EDUCATION SUPPORT AND TRAINING (BEST)  
PROJECT  
QUARTERLY REPORT: APRIL TO JUNE 2008**

**1. Overview**

Background Statement

On September 30, 2007, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID)/Yemen and the Academy for Educational Development (AED) entered into an Associate Cooperative Agreement (No.: 279-A-00-07-00092-00) to launch the Basic Education Support and Training (BEST) Project. The BEST-Yemen Project builds on the experience and successes of the four-year Basic Education (BE) Project implemented from 2004-2008 under the Educational Quality Improvement Program (EQUIP1). BEST-Yemen is especially designed to optimize the replication of strategies proven under the BE Project. These strategies are intended to improve access to quality education, especially for girls and increase the supply and retention of qualified female teachers. The project will implement approaches that are determined to be appropriate to the needs and aspirations of the targeted governorates, communities and schools. As was the case with the BE Project, BEST will emphasize interventions that are especially intended to generate synergies around the targeted schools through activities such as infrastructure renovation, adult literacy support, teacher professional development and community participation. BEST-Yemen is also designed to contribute to the analysis of relevant policies within the Ministry of Education (MOE) that affect the conditions of school-age girls and boys as well as educators throughout the country.

October through December constituted the first quarter of the cooperative agreement which was principally dedicated to the design of the proposed Basic Education Support and Training Project. This took the form of the BEST “Application for Assistance” which was resubmitted for final approval to the USAID contracting officers on December 7, 2007. The revised version of the application was fully approved in early February. In January 2008, the BEST First Quarterly Report covering October to December 2007 was prepared and submitted as was the Quarterly Financial Report. Similarly, the Second Quarterly Report for the period of January to March 2008 was prepared and submitted in April. With the design phase (October to December 2007) over, BEST is currently in the Implementation phase (January 2008 to December 2012).

The first six months of the project were intended to be an opportunity for the AED staff to place a Chief of Party on the ground in Yemen, complete project start-up activities, and formulate a work plan for the remainder of 2008. This work plan was completed in May and covers a range of activities from selection of project sites/localities, establishing activities, creating oversight mechanisms like the Advisory Board, and most importantly, managing the transfer of appropriate material resources, personnel and activities from the BE to the BEST Project through the “lens” of the new basic education project design. The design places special emphasis on community profiling, integration of activities using a holistic approach, and focusing on process as much as on results so as to optimize the opportunities for sustainable educational development in remote and other challenging environments across the project themes of (a) Access, (b) Equity, (c) Quality Improvement, (d)

Institutional and Organizational Development, and (e) Decentralization and Participation.

### BEST Mission and Objectives

BEST will operate within the broad framework of the Government of Yemen's (GOY) Basic Education Development Strategy (BEDS) which emphasizes:

- Access for Yemeni children to basic education
- Equity of opportunity for females and males to education services
- Quality improvements that place the student and the teacher at the center of the education system
- Improved capacity and internal efficiency of the Ministry of Education at all levels
- Sub-national participation in the improvement of education

Given this framework, the Mission Statement for the BEST Project is *“bridging the gap between development activities and systems-building by increasing the relevance of policies, especially as related to achievement of gender objectives”*.

While building on the experience and achievements of the BE project, BEST is expanding its work, in consultation with the MOE and other donor partners so as to ensure sustainability of successful approaches and innovations. The work plan for BEST has been aligned with that of the MOE for 2008 and for successive years through the life of the project. The rationale for doing this is to effectively "mainstream" our work plans with GOY's own educational development plans and implementation strategies and ensure complementarity. BEST will simultaneously collaborate strategically with other related donor projects so as to create critical masses within and across programmatic areas for effectiveness, desired impact and optimum sustainability within the targeted communities, districts, governorates and over time, elsewhere in the nation.

Against this background, the central goal and key objectives of BEST are expressed below.

*BEST Goal Statement: To strengthen the capacity of communities, schools and the Ministry of Education to sustain educational improvements for their children and their children's children.*

Statement of BEST Objectives:

- *To enhance the capacity of targeted MOE units at all levels to support educational improvement consistent with the national decentralization policy*
- *To expand work on improvement of Education Management Information Systems (EMIS), learning environments, teacher training, Mothers' and Fathers' Councils (MFCs), learning materials and adult literacy in the schools and communities*
- *To develop, with the MOE, a community school policy to address the issue of parity between boys' and girls' enrollment and retention in schools*
- *To support development of policies and actions that result in recruitment and retention of female teachers.*

This quarterly performance report covers the period of April through June 2008. This time period can be summarized as one of accelerated transition of staff and material resources from BE to BEST, and selection of activities in the programmatic area, while facing a myriad of challenges. The activities, accomplishments, challenges and lessons learned from April to June are reported in the remainder of the document in the categories of (a) Administration and Operations and (b) Technical.

## **2. Administration and Operations**

Building on the accomplishments of the start-up phase of the previous quarter, several in-progress and new activities were undertaken in the April to June 2008 time period in accordance with the plans set forth in the Application for Assistance, the February 2008 Transition Management Plan, and the approved May to December 2008 BEST-Yemen Project Work Plan (May 2008). These are summarized below.

2.1 BEST-Yemen Project Registration Completed: The challenges of fully registering the project through the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation with approval from the Ministry of Education were overcome early in the quarter, opening the doors for full fledged operations.

2.2 Presence of BEST-Yemen Project in the Ministry of Education: During the reporting period, the BEST Project built on the accomplishments of the previous quarter by completing the installation of Internet, fax and phone lines and procurement of essential office equipment and supplies. During this period, the office and adjacent conference room served as a work place for project staff, for weekly meetings of the administration and leadership, day-to-day operations for a limited number of staff as well as a site for regular monthly BEST Project Staff Meetings. The proximity to some of the main partners in the MOE helped in consultations with them during the completion of planning activities, and also contributed to the enhancement of a sense of ownership for the project among relevant Ministry representatives.

2.3 Project Staffing Accelerated: By the middle of April, the project staff grew from the Chief of Party and one short-term local consultant to a total of ten, with nine of the new staff being transferred to BEST from the BE Project. By the end of that same month, four additional staff were transferred and by the first of May, the number of fulltime Yemeni staff totaled 16, including a new professional in the position of Basic Education Support Advisor. The other fulltime staff positions included drivers, technical team members, a project executive assistant and an administrative assistant. We expect the project to be in full operation by July with a projected staff of 36 to support the implementation of the approved work plan through December 2008. Some of the key accomplishments of the project staff from April to June 2008 are cited in the sections that follow in this report.

The recruitment process for a Deputy Chief of Party included a national and international search, resulting in the selection of a designated professional in early May. [Her arrival was on hold due to travel restrictions based on in-country security conditions which remain in place as of the writing of this report. She worked on an array of finance, operations and management assignments through the end of the report period and these are covered in Section III.]

2.4 Security Measures in Place: A joint Contingency Emergency Evacuation Plan (CEEP) was prepared at the request of the USAID/Yemen Mission Director. It was completed in collaboration with representatives of USAID, the AED home office, and the COPs of both the BE and BEST Projects. The broader AED BE "Risk Management and Emergency Plan" was further amended during the report period so as to update contacts in country and among key staff. The BEST Project Chief of Party also established a project "Staff Communications Chain" at the first BEST Staff Meeting in April so that local staff would know precisely who to contact in addition to the COP regarding any security news or issue that might arise. Plans are in place at the time of writing this report to update all project security and evacuation plans upon the completion of the BE Project in July.

*Security Communication Chain:* An updated list of all staff contact was provided to each team member during the meetings. The COP has introduced "2C" security tool for communication between staff whereby each one will contact two other staff, one listed before him/her and one listed after. This technique is to be used mainly during emergency situations; however, it was also agreed that the same could be used for communicating about important technical happenings as well.

2.5 Teamwork and Capacity Building Underway: With the increased emphasis on security and safety and the acceleration of staffing and operations of the BEST-Yemen Project, the COP intensified the process of building a solid project team essential to successfully operate the project in the event of further risk and possible evacuations. The end result is intended to be a more effective team whose members possess greater knowledge and competencies to perform their assigned roles and responsibilities.

Among the main instruments being used during the period for the building of a stronger, more effective team have been on-the-job mentoring by the COP and on a total-team basis, skills building sessions in small groups and through the regular BEST staff meetings which have been held an average of once per month. Another key vehicle for team building and staff professional development that has been approved within the work plan through December and is projected to be held twice annually as of 2009 is the "BEST Project Retreat." The monthly staff meetings were the principal instrument for team building during the reporting period and three such meetings were held. The staff has expressed its appreciation for these meetings as they served as important opportunities to share information, discuss issues of importance to all, while enhancing communications and the development of interpersonal skills. During the meetings, staff was updated on different topics such as work plans, activities implemented, selection of new governorates to be targeted by BEST, security, the Contingency Emergency Evacuation Plan (CEEP), Advisory Board and upcoming events such as the forthcoming August BEST Project Retreat and the joint event for recognition of BE and launching BEST. Some of the accomplishments or outcomes of the staff meetings to date include the following:

(a) *Job Description Update:* All members were instructed to review their job descriptions to ensure they understood their roles and responsibilities. The task proved revealing to not only the COP but to the staff too and resulted in updating of the job descriptions to reflect staff skills as well as project needs. The DCOP and

field staff worked on the first phase of producing a "BEST Project Staff Job Description Booklet" using these revised job descriptions as input.

(b) *Management Tools*: Some very useful management tools were introduced to the staff by the COP and these instruments such as routing forms and activity logs, among others, have results in a better communications and management of work.

(c) *Communications and Interpersonal Skills*: Different communication mechanisms were briefly illustrated by the COP during the staff meeting such as the "3Cs, 4Cs and 5Cs" (Communication, Cooperation, Collaboration, Consultation and Compromising) while addressing means of improving teamwork. The interest expressed in these and other means of enhancing individual and team communications and interpersonal skills resulted in the inclusion of this topic for more in depth instruction and learning in future meetings and during the First BEST Staff Retreat.

(d) BEST-Yemen Special Interest Groups (SIGs) and Committees: Different SIGs and committees were formed as outcomes of the staff meetings. These were formed in order to address the diverse project-related interests of team members and further increases the opportunities to develop their skills. The SIGs and committees can serve to foster collaboration on tasks and activities vital to project success such as the work of planning a well-founded and successful staff retreat. The different SIGs and committees that were formed by the staff during the period include the following: Information Technology SIG (already formed); Early Childhood SIG; and Peace and Conflict Resolution SIG; Committees: BEST-Yemen Retreat Committee (already formed and arranging for the First BEST-Yemen Retreat); Social Committee (already formed); and Professional Development Committee.

Improved teamwork and capacity building were among the areas of primary concern and the attention of the COP throughout the reporting period. These two areas will remain a significant part of the way forward for an ever-improving, effective project "T.E.A.M." where "Together Each Achieves More."

2.6 Transition Management Plan Implemented: As of the end of the quarter, June 30, the Basic Education Project and BEST Project neared the completion of their close coordination to finalize the implementation of the "Transition Management Plan" which addresses an array of key considerations for transition of resources and select activities from BE to BEST. The two COPs worked in collaboration with USAID/Yemen, completing a dozen formal meetings through the end of June so as to ensure a smooth transition process. An established timeline was adhered to for the transfer of required office space, equipment, vehicles and other essential resources for BEST Project start-up and mobilization. The transfer of select staff, as mentioned above, was an integral part of the transition plan. By mid-April, BEST was able to successfully initiate basic education training and community participation activities as described in Section III of this quarterly report. USAID and AED agreed that these programmatic activities and related targets were to be incorporated into the BEST project implementation plan for 2008 and these were incorporated into the work plan submitted and approved in May. This acceleration of the planning and implementation of thematic, technical activities was a constructive means for both collaboration between the projects and it provided a path to early recognition of BEST-Yemen throughout the different levels of the Ministry of Education.

2.7 BEST Project Human Resources: The DCOP assisted the project in several areas related to human resources, including initiating the process of preparing an organizational chart for the BEST Project and gathering plans and policies for the BEST Project Field Office Manual. The Field Office Manual is based on the AED Manual of Standard Policies and Procedures. The Field Office Manual, together with the AED Manual of Standard Policies and Procedures, sets forth the standard policies and procedures that enable AED staff to adhere to these guiding principles in conducting their work. A sampling of policies and procedures covered in the BEST Project Field Office Manual is listed below:

- Relationship between field operations and Washington home office, including roles and responsibilities for the field office and the home office;
- Authorities, including the hierarchy of authority, signature authority, and delegation of authority;
- Establishing legal representation and other business relationships, including legal and accounting representation, local banks, insurance agencies, and vendors
- Field office operations, including use of facilities, equipment and vehicles, chain of command, and security;
- Field office administrative operations, including performance issues for employees, financial management and accounting, contracts and procurement, and hiring consultants; and
- Emergency procedures and risk management, including a checklist for emergencies and procedures for managing evacuations.

The BEST Project Field Office Manual should be viewed as a work in progress and will be updated as needed over subsequent quarters.

2.8 Donor and Other Organizational Contacts: Contact with donor agencies and others involved in the education sector continued throughout the reporting period. Partnership discussions are projected more for the long-term LOP rather than the immediate months ahead so as to ensure wiser decisions and planning well in coordination with MOE as well as the prospective partners. As in the previous quarter, private companies have expressed interest in partnering with BEST. BEST training staff, the COP and Basic Education Support Advisor collaborated with the Yemen Liquid Natural Gas Company, for example, in assisting its representatives in preparing a plan for the training for and utilization of "My Arabic Library" in needy schools located in the Shabwah Governorate. One activity with donors that was not accomplished in June was the presentation of the BEST-Yemen Project at a called meeting of the Donor Committee. This was due to the committee chairperson being unexpectedly absent from Yemen for an extended period of time. As of the writing of this report, an alternate time for the presentation is to be set for as early as July.

2.9 Joint Basic Education Project Recognition and BEST Project Launch: Near the end of the reporting period, a combined formal closing event for BE Project in recognition of its accomplishments and the launch of the BEST Project was planned under the leadership of the MOE Technical Office in collaboration with USAID/Y and solid support from BEST staff. At the time of writing this report, final arrangements were in process with a proposed date for the event being in the third week of July.

### **3. Technical Approach: Themes, Activities, Challenges, Accomplishments and Lessons Learned**

This section of the report includes the main activities, key accomplishments and a listing of some of the lessons learned in relation to technical themes and approaches. They are addressed under several activity area titles below. The thematic or programmatic areas are limited to Training and Community Participation because these were the two components that were implemented during the period. The other components had not transferred as of the end of June from the BE to the BEST Project. The activities in future reports will be organized according to the five thematic categories cited in the overview section once the new governorates, districts, communities and schools to be targeted are selected.

3.1 Completion and Approval of Detailed Work Plan (WP): The WP for May to December 2008 was completed and approved in May. In addition to a comprehensive narrative that provides background information on all project implementers and key stakeholders, it includes detailed plans that are divided into two parts: (A) "Start-up and Initial Implementation Activities" and (B) "Transition Programmatic Activities." The latter activities are primarily designed to enhance USAID/Y's existing educational investments, with the expectation that transitional activities will be implemented to sustain Mareb and Shabwah no later than June 2009. The emphasis in the 2008 WP and the January to June period of the 2009 AWP will be on strategies for enhancing sustainability of effective approaches to improve girls' education and female teacher retention, expand adult literacy and community participation through Mother and Father Councils (MFCs) and creating an enabling environment such as capacity building that will reinforce the continuation of desirable education development strategies long after the completion of the BEST Project.

Preparations for the January 2009 to December 2012 LOP plan were initiated prior to the end of the current report period. During this same timeframe, deliberations took place with USAID/Yemen on the format to be followed so as to ensure that the plans are compatible with the Mission's Portfolio, utilizing, for example, the "Program Elements" and "Sub-Elements" under "Basic Education." A document entitled "Monitoring and Evaluating BEST" prepared by Dr. Tom Welsh for AED's "Application for Assistance" has also been given consideration in the approved WP for 2008. The draft document provides a description of the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) framework and a set of M&E guiding principles as the groundwork for the activities projected for the LOP work plan through the year 2012. This topic and the project Performance Monitoring Plan are to be among major considerations over the next quarters.

3.2 Progress in the Selection of Governorates: In concert with USAID/Y and the Ministry of Education, BEST-Yemen has been addressing the significant matter of the selection of the new governorates to be targeted through 2012 under the project. The COP has assisted in the short listing of governorates currently under consideration, summarized the draft statement of selection criteria that might be used, and proposed the next steps for completing the selection process for consideration by representatives from the Ministry and USAID. This was completed on the basis of the inputs received from representatives of the Projects Sector, Technical Office, Teacher Training and Qualifications and Girls' Education as well as a result of the review by USAID and BEST/Yemen. Based on their suggestions and the security

clearance by the US Embassy Regional Security Officer (RSO), the governorates named herein comprise the proposed short list to date. It has been determined that Amran (South) is to be included under BEST in addition to one or more new governorates, using the criteria for selection that is yet to be finalized by the MOE as of the writing of this report. Governorates under consideration as of the end of June include the following: Aden, Dhamar, Hudaydah, Ibb, Mahwit, Raymah, Sana'a, and Taiz. [The composite draft criteria for governorate selection and recommended next steps prepared by the COP are available upon request.] The MOE representatives and USAID/Y were presented with a copy in Arabic and English of the "Guide to Needs Analysis and Investment Opportunities in Yemen" that was authored by Dr. Thomas Welsh, designated Policy, Systems and Decentralized Support Consultant, whose approved short-term technical assistance trip for late-March to early-April had to be postponed due to restrictions on travel resulting from security decisions. As expressed in the approved WP for 2008, the document is intended to assist the project designers, implementers (project and those in the targeted communities and educational institutions), relevant partners and other stakeholders to make the more effective and efficient physical and enabling investment decisions in the short- and long-term, contributing to more sustainable development of the education system at all levels.

3.3 Training Activities: Training activities that were transferred from the BE to the BEST Project at the start of the quarter and as planned and implemented during the report period are summarized below.

*Trainers Training of Teachers in the Science Subjects Grades 4 – 9*: From April 23 to May 1, eighteen (18) trainers of grade 4 – 9 science subjects from the governorates of Shabwah and Amran were trained in Sana'a to teach teachers in each of the science subjects taught in the upper basic education grades. The focus of the training was on methods and materials for teaching science at these grade levels, utilizing local materials found in the Yemeni communities.

The related statistics are provided in the following table.

### Basic Training of Trainers in Science Subjects

Targeted Group	Training Location	Training Time		Participants			
		From	To	Governorate	Male	Female	Total
Teacher Trainers for classes (9-4) of Shabwah and Amran	Sana'a Al-Juraf Institute	April 23, 2008	May 1, 2008	Amran	10	1	11
				Shabwah	7	0	7
				Total	17	1	18

### Teacher Teachers of Grades 4 – 9 in Science Subjects



From May 5, 2008 - May 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2008, 157 classroom teachers of grades 4 – 9 science subject were trained in seven training centers in Amran and Shabwah governorates. The communities and local councils supported the training activities and described them as among the most successful and useful trainings they had witnessed. (This input was provided by leaders of the local authority in both the Shabwah and

Amran governorates.) Based on the quality of training such as the methods utilized as well as the devices and materials that were produced from the raw materials of local environment, the cost compared most favorably with the local market for the same instructional materials. This was viewed as helping to improve the approach to teaching science subjects in the upper level grades within basic education. The statistics related to this training are provided in the following table.

#### Summary Statistics for Grade 4-9 of Science Subjects: Part II, Amran and Shabwah May 2008

No.	Governorate	District	Trainees No.			Center No.	Trainers			Implementation Period
			Male	Female	Total		Male	Female	Total	
1	Amran	Amran	46	20	66	3	6	1	7	May 5, 2008 – May 18 , 2008
		Thula`a	17	7	24	1	3	0	3	May 5,2008 – May 18, 2008
الإجمالي			63	27	90	4	9	1	10	
2	Shabwah	Attaq	19	6	25	1	3	0	3	May 10, 2008 – May 22 , 2008
		Bihan	21	1	22	1	2	0	2	May 10, 2008 – May 22 , 2008
		Khora	17	3	20	1	2	0	2	May 5,2008 – May 18, 2008
Sub Total			57	10	67	3	7	0	7	
TOTAL			120	37	157	7	16	1	17	



### *End-of-School-Year Teacher Supervision and Training*

A total of 14 Teacher Inspectors implemented 81 end-of-year field visits to 39 USAID-supported basic education schools in Amran and Shabwah governorates and conducted five professional development workshops as follow-up activities to the visits. The purpose of the school supervision was to observe, assess and plan for the skills development workshops conducted immediately thereafter. Between May 10 and 29, the inspectors organized five workshops in five clusters for 93 teachers (84 males and 9 female) who teach in grades 1-3 and 31 headmasters (28 males and 3 female) in the targeted schools. During the workshops, the teachers and the headmasters were provided the opportunity to share successful experiences, discussed problems in their work, and formulated approaches that could help them overcome challenges and difficulties they might face in the future. One of the several results of the visitations and related professional development workshops was the design of detailed plans on the improved use of child-centered instructional aides and "My Arabic Library" books for grades 1 – 3.

### *Follow-up and Professional Development Workshops*

During the period from May 10 – 25, five meetings were held in cluster schools for follow-up and professional development for teachers of grades 1-3 and for schools administrations. This was conducted in order to review the results of school visits regarding successful performance and areas for improved performance of teachers and school administrations. These were observed by inspectors during visits and later they were discussed with the purpose of finding ways to improve. Experiences of the participant teachers and administrators were also exchanged during the workshops as another means of enhancing performance. Summary statistics are provided in the table below.

Total of participants schools	Participants								
	Teacher			Schools Principles			Inspectors and Supervisors		
	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C
39	84	9	93	28	3	31	13		13

### *Lessons Learned*

Among the most important lessons learned in the quarter are the following:

- Visits to schools and follow-up meetings make a strong impact on improving the performance of teachers and school administrators;
- Mentors who are responsible for the implementation of follow-up visits and meetings require additional training in methods of evaluation of teacher performance and that of school administrations, including methods of monitoring, follow-up interviewing/ conferencing and technical development in some areas;
- Associated training needs such as planning and participant assessment skills of target groups have a significant impact on improving the performance of trainees;
- Intensified practical training and practical applications during the training support the learning of improved skills for the trainees; and

- Coordination and cooperation with relevant parties within the same specialization helps lead to successful training.

### 3.4 Community Participation Activities

*Community Participation Monitoring Activity:* The BEST-Yemen Project conducted its first community participation follow-up activities in May for all 77 schools targeted under the BE Project and transferred to BEST in the three governorates which are currently receiving USAID basic education support. A total of 20 (10 female and 10 male) Community Participation Facilitators from the governorate and district levels in Amran, Mareb and Shabwah were trained to conduct school visitations and observations with the purpose of gathering information on school progress in community participation through the Parent Councils, including incorporating the implementation of the council's plans, documenting key activities, identifying and solving relevant educational issues, and, more importantly, promoting girls education.

*Formation of New Parent Councils:* During the reporting period, the following Parent Councils received further training for the purpose of reorganizing and strengthening or they were formed for the first time.

- Reformed Fatima Al-zahaa's mothers' council in Khawrah district/Shabwah (8 mothers).
- Formed three new mothers' councils in Bayhan/ Shabwah.
- Formed one new mothers' council in Thula/ Amran.

#### *Training of Parent Councils*

- Trained Al-tashih school mothers' council (12 mothers) on duties and responsibilities and girl education. Motivation and maintenance of school.
- Trained 7 mothers' council (68 mothers) in Amran on planning of activities and community mobilization.

#### *Community Participation Consultative Workshops For Parents Councils, Headmasters and community leaders*



Follow-up activities implemented during the 2007-2008 school year were covered in a series of workshops during the reporting period. The objectives included: (1) Follow-up on the activities that were implemented during the first half of school year 07/08 according to the prepared plans; (2) Review and modify plans; (3) Assess progress; (4) Exchange experiences; (5)

Activate community participation (Parents, Headmasters and Leaders); and (6) Solicit suggestions for new activities, especially for the summer.

The workshops were held as follow for the locations and dates:  
Shabwah governorate:

Salem Baker Cluster    Khawrah District,    April 29, 2008  
Belquies Cluster        Bayhan District,        April 30, 2008  
Qawban Cluster         Ataq District,            May 3, 2008

Targeted groups and participants:

<b>Title:</b>	<b>Salem Baker cluster (Khawrah)</b>	<b>Belquies cluster (Bayhan)</b>	<b>Qawban cluster (Ataq)</b>	<b>Total</b>
Heads of Fathers and Mothers Councils	5	11	6	22
Headmasters	4	10	5	19
District's Head of Girls' Education Department & Community Participation Specialist	2	2	2	6
School Social Workers	2	2	2	6
District Office Education Manager	1	1	1	3
Governorate Girls' Education Manager	1			1
Monitoring and Evaluation Manager – MOE	1			1
<b>Total</b>				<b>58</b>

#### *Summary of Workshop Results*

The assessment workshops mentioned above resulted in a list of 56 outcomes which were the activities the PCs conducted during the 1<sup>st</sup> half of the school year 2007 – 2008. The results indicate how active, motivated and supportive the councils were following the training. Examples of PC activities included meetings with school administrations; contributions to meet school needs e.g. water bath, toiletries; maintenance of school furniture and building; producing awareness bulletins about the importance of girl education; and implementing meetings with parents of students to urge them to educate girls. [Full list of workshop assessment results is available upon request]

#### *Challenges: Difficulties and Problems Encountered*

- Closure of some schools by the owners of the land
- Lack of teachers
- Withdrawal of some students
- Lack of school textbook
- Lack of teaching aids
- Leak of teachers of specialties in some schools
- Transfer of teachers in the middle of the school year
- Lack of laboratories in some schools
- Lack of bathrooms in some schools
- Absence of radios in school

### *Preparing for Parents Summer Activities*

At the governorate and district levels, the headmasters and the parent councils were notified that the project will provide needed tools and supplies for schools that wish to organize summer activities for students on the condition they will provide volunteers to work at the learning centers during the summer months. Requests in this regard have been received from some schools and procedures for funding these requests are underway for completion during the months of July and August 2008. The project technical staff has made plans to directly supervise the implementation of the scheduled activities in participating communities and schools.

### EMIS Workshop in Cairo

The DCOP, along with the BEST Training Coordinator and Community Participation Coordinator, attended the Education Management Information System (EMIS) Workshop organized by the American Institutes for Research (AIR) from June 11 - 14. The purpose of this trip was to participate in the workshop and also for the MOE and BEST staff to interact with the DCOP while travel restrictions to Yemen remained in place. This trip also provided an opportunity for the DCOP to meet with Senior Education Specialists from USAID/Egypt, learn about USAID/Egypt's education programs, including education reform, restructuring of the Ministry of Education, school accreditation, use of teacher identification numbers and data collection at the school level. Major deliverables produced as a direct result of this workshop include the following:

- Draft list of action items and schedule to integrate the various departments of the Ministry of Education to promote improved data collection and analysis, identifying the top five priorities and associated challenges; and
- Draft analysis of the material presented in the School Atlas for Raymah Province.

In addition to providing useful information on research and report writing, the EMIS Workshop facilitated the resolution of some differences between the MOE data collection, data storage and data usage activities.



## **4. Statement of Work and Challenges for Subsequent Quarters**

Key Events and Deliverables: Adjustments to the current implementation plan, based on the revised application for assistance, have been agreed to since the February start-up phase regarding the calendar of key events and deliverables given the realities in

the field. These are largely a consequence of increasing security concerns in the country. The remaining adjustments that are required are reflected in the approved WP for the remainder of 2008 and include:

- Creation of a BEST Project Advisory Board (move the dates from 3/31/08 to July 2008)
- Conduct “preliminary reviews of proposed project sites” (from 3/31/08 to coordinate with the process of the selection of governorates and no later than December 2008)
- Recommendations for target districts with investment criteria (no later than December 2008; early enough to feed into the long-term planning for 2009 to 2012 and the detailed Annual Work Plan for 2009 in coordination with the MOE Annual Work Plan for the same period).

All other activities for the July to September quarter are detailed in the WP. Emphasis will need to be given to accessing short term technical assistance (STTA) required, especially related to completing the related needs assessment for governorate selection and community profiling of selected districts, communities and corresponding targeted schools. Additional attention will also need to be given to accessing STTA required for the preparation of the Monitoring and Evaluation and Performance Monitoring Plans for the life of the project.

Challenges:

The current travel restrictions on consultants and international staff continue to pose a major concern in completion of the related tasks. The DCOP was not able to travel to the field and was working from Seattle, which is far from an optimum situation, especially in view of the increased number of staff to manage and lead as well as the intensification of technical and other activities under the BEST-Yemen Project. Security has delayed project implementation in the governorates of Shabwah and especially Mareb, where activities from April to June had to be delayed. Hence, security issues may well cause further delays and possible cancellations.

The lack of a DCOP for Finance, Administration and Operations continues to present a major challenge because of the increased number of staff to manage, and acceleration of technical activities in the next quarter under the BEST-Yemen Project.