



USAID
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Quarterly Report

October - December 2008



Submitted to **USAID Philippines**

by

Education Development Center, Inc.

In accordance with
Cooperative Agreement No. 492-A-00-06-00024-00A





EQuALLS PHASE 2

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ABBREVIATION LIST

ALS	Alternative Learning Systems
ARMM	Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao
AusAID	Australian Agency for International Development
BBF	Brother’s Brother Foundation
BEAM	Basic Education Assistance for Mindanao
BME	Bureau of Madari Education
BPI	Business Profiles Inc.
CBLS	Community-Based Learning System
CLC	Community Learning Center
DAP	Development Asset Profile
DAP T1	Development Asset Profile Time One
DepED	Department of Education
EDC	Education Development Center
ELC	English Language Camp
ELSA	Education and Livelihood Skills Alliance
EQuALLS2	Education Quality and Access for Learning and Livelihood Skills Phase 2
EPP	English Proficiency Program
GDA	Global Development Alliance
GEM	Growth with Equity in Mindanao
HQ	EDC Headquarters
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IM	Instructional Manager
IR	Immediate Result
IYF	International Youth Foundation
JSOTF	US Military Joint Special Operations Task Force
LGU	Local Government Unit
LSB	Local School Board
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MSU	Mindanao State University

NDMU-CCC	Notre Dame Marbel University - Champagnat Community College
NEPP	National English Proficiency Program
O&C	Outreach and Communications
OSCY	Out-of-School Children and Youth
PASA	Participating Agency Service Agreement
PMT	Project Management Team
PTCA	Parent Teacher Community Association
QPR	Quarterly Progress Report
RBEC	Revised Basic Education Curriculum
RFP	Request for Proposals
RPO	Regional Program Officer
SC	Save the Children
TA	Technical Adviser
TEI	Teacher Education Institute
TEPT	Test of English Proficiency of Teachers
TOT	Training of Trainers
TWG	Technical Working Group
UP-NISMED	University of the Philippines - National Institute for Science and Math Education Development
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USPC	United States Peace Corps
VAT	Value-added Tax

LIST OF ANNEXES

- Annex 1: Communications Products (Weekly Highlights; Published Articles; Other)
- Annex 2: Quarterly Report – International Youth Foundation (IYF/ELSA)
- Annex 3: Quarterly Report – Save the Children
- Annex 4: Quarterly Report – Synergeia Foundation
- Annex 5: Quarterly Report – Petron Foundation
- Annex 6: Technical Guidance Note: Community Incentive Grants Guidelines and Supporting documents
- Annex 7: ICT Briefing document and PowerPoint presentation

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Education Development Center, Inc. is pleased to submit this 1st Quarter Report for fiscal year 2009 to USAID for the ‘*Education Quality and Access for Learning and Livelihood Skills 2*’ (EQuALLS2) Project in the Philippines’ Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), and Regions 9 and 12. The following information articulates the successes and challenges faced by the project during the reporting period October - December 2008.

Key EQuALLS2 achievements for this period:

- **7,548¹ out-of-school youth (OSY) completers of basic education and workforce development programs**
1,968 learners completed programs to improve basic literacy skills and prepare for reintegration into formal school. 3,842 learners participated in life skills courses that strengthened the foundation for participation in other ALS and workforce development options. 1,738 OSYs graduated from workforce and skills development programs (food processing; baking; beauty care; gardening and horticulture; arc welding; engine repair and mechanics; etc) linked to local employment and livelihood opportunities.
- **296,000 books placed in schools using innovative methodology**
Teachers selected books for their classrooms and schools in large quantities. The approach encouraged them to find creative ways to maximize the use of donated books as supplementary materials, strengthening teachers’ ownership of the books.
- **2,034 teachers progressed in training as mentors for English, science and math**
In collaboration with Teacher Education Institutions (Mindanao universities) and DepED trainers, teacher mentors followed last quarter’s first training cycle with the second training cycle in English (643 teacher-mentors) and math (782 teacher-mentors). 609 mentors participated in their first cycle of training in science.
- **338 Parent-Teacher-Community Associations (PTCA) and Local School Boards (LSB) gained capacity to address education improvement issues**
Interventions strengthened education improvement planning and resource mobilization, as well as financial management capabilities of PTCAs, using Save the Children’s organizational development and project management training, and ELSA’s strategic planning training and non-training innovative capacity building interventions - all guided by the results of institutional capacity assessments.
- **A common system for administering community incentive grants developed, using participatory process**
CIG Guidelines, developed in consultation with partners and OEd, emphasize the importance of education needs assessments and PTCA capacity-building training, as well

¹ The number of completers is not equivalent to the related FACTS indicator located under section IV. M&E, which measures OSCY ‘enrolled’.

as implementation and funds management systems as prerequisites to awarding community grants.

Technical Leadership

During the quarter, EDC and its lead implementing partners prioritized community engagement activities aimed at building PTCA and LSB capacity and prepared for the execution of community grants. With EDC's continuing technical guidance, partners pushed forward with teacher training programs in English, math and science, and advanced basic education and workforce and skills development programs for out-of-school youth during the quarter. One highlight was the tremendous interest in donated books generated by innovative book distribution strategies. Learning centers and classrooms were constructed or repaired during the quarter, and, security concerns in some areas limited the pace of activities.

Highlight achievements during the quarter, by Intermediate Result, include the following:

IR1: Increasing learning opportunities for children and youth through community support for education and livelihood programming

- Partners completed organizational capacity assessments (inserted in the Q4 FY08 Report) for 338 PTCAs and LSBs in EQuALLS2 sites. Save the Children and ELSA designed training and non-training interventions (education campaigns; advocacy initiatives) based on the results of the assessments. PTCA trainings focused on organizational development, and on project implementation and financial management.
- EDC finalized Community Incentive Grants Guidelines, in consultation with partners and OEd. The guidelines emphasize the importance of a participatory education needs assessment and PTCA capacity-building training, as well as of a functional project implementation and funds management systems as prerequisites to awarding community grants. Grants are expected to be awarded in quarter 2, FY09.
- Progress was made in the provision of physical learning facilities, with Petron Foundation and their partner, Habitat for Humanity, constructing 2 classrooms and 11 refurbished classrooms this quarter (14 and 42 to date, respectively), with a project target of 120 constructed classrooms and 480 renovated classrooms.

IR2: Strengthening the capacity for instruction in English, Science and Math

- Training for teacher-mentors progressed with a second cycle of core training in English and math. EDC and partners (52 trainers from Teacher Education Institutions in Mindanao and 67 from DepED's pool of trainers) trained 643 teacher-mentors in English course 2 training, 782 in math course 2, and 609 teachers in the first science course.
- Core training for teacher-mentors was complemented by supplementary training (Training ++) targeting additional teachers in the same schools, subjects and grades. This quarter, Save the Children trained teachers from 40 schools in Maguindanao on topics covered under the math courses, and 382 teachers from South Cotabato were trained by ELSA using the core training materials in English and math.

- Book fairs and book-shopping events empowered teachers to choose books and teaching materials they need in their classrooms and schools. These approaches generated great interest and excitement, and developed ownership among teachers for these resources. This quarter alone 296,000 books and teaching materials were distributed to teachers representing 83 schools in region 12 and the ARMM, and 300 teachers representing 103 schools from Zamboanga City, Sulu, Basilan, Isabela City, and Tawi-Tawi.

IR3: Improved relevance and training for out-of-school children and youth (OSCY)

- Save the Children moved forward with 2,669 learners, and ELSA reached 1,968 learners through their basic literacy and life skills program options. A total of 217 instructional managers and youth learning facilitators were trained by partners to deliver these programs. Promising practices and the impact of these programs are having on learners' lives are being documented.
- Synergeia oriented 75 OSCYs from Maguindanao in residential house wiring and small engine repair. Comprehensive training will be conducted in the next quarter.
- ELSA and Save the Children's workforce development programs continued to generate considerable interest among OSCY. Thirty-three completers of ELSA's welding and building wiring installation, and massage therapy courses passed TESDA's national competency certification, 436 learners are attending Save's skills training and industry immersion program, and 1,382 completed a shorter technology-based skills training program.

Strategic Partnerships

EDC focused on strengthening strategic partnerships with key stakeholders this quarter, including USAID, DepED, sub-grantees, existing and potential GDA partners, and other groups. Some of the details are as follows:

USAID

Assisted USAID, primarily the Office of Education (OEd), in monitoring and providing oversight and related assistance over the project, specifically on the following:

- Preparing input for the Project Implementation Review (PIR), in terms of data/information on project targets and accomplishments.
- Providing a number of events planning/implementation that included project site visits by the US Ambassador, DCM, USAID officials and guests; and OED monitoring visits.
- Arranging and facilitating meetings between USAID and DepED on the signing of important agreements (specifically the USG-GRP Bilateral Assistance Agreement on Education).
- Coordinating with the USAID Controller's Office for the conduct of a Control Environment and Risk Assessment.

DepED

Strengthened strategic partnerships with DepED at various levels:

- Update and consultation meetings with the Undersecretary for Programs and Projects, and the various bureau and center directors and their staff on specific program concerns.

- Coordination and consultation meetings with the Regional Directors for Region 9 (Dir. Walter Albos) and Region 12 (Dir. Luz Almeda), and the Education Secretary (Sec. Udtog Kawit) for the ARMM, and selected Division Superintendents and key supervisors in these three regions.
- Coordination, joint planning and conduct of major project activities with local DepED officials on teacher training and continuing capacity building on English, science and mathematics, and on beginning reading.
- Joint planning and conduct of very successful new activities such as two major book fairs in Koronadal for Region 12 (October 27-28) and in Zamboanga City (November 24) for Region 9 and some of the island provinces of the ARMM.
- Coordinating with the national DepED secretariat for ICT to align the project ICT strategy with the DepED national strategy.

Lead Implementing Partners

Provided technical leadership, coordination and sub-grants management functions with sub recipients/partners:

- Finalization of the sub recipients' annual work planning process, leading to completion of partners' annual work plans and budgets for Year 2.
- Monitoring and coordination of project implementation through leadership and technical meetings, field monitoring visits, review and discussion of partner quarter reports, and related activities.
- Conduct of joint project-wide activities such as training, monitoring, tools and guidelines development, and coordination of field events, including VIP visits.

External

Reinforced partnerships with:

- US Peace Corps on the joint planning and implementation of agreed collaborative activities such as the training of PTCAs through the Project Development and Management (PDM) workshops; and the joint planning of English Language Camps (ELCs), both of which will be focused on EQuALLS2 sites/ beneficiaries.
- AusAID's Basic Education Assistance for Mindanao (BEAM) project, on continuing implementation of agreed collaborative activities in teacher training.
- Joint Special Operations Task Force (JSOTF) of the US military on the delivery of books to a number of recipient municipalities/schools.
- GDA potential partners, such as: National Book Store Foundation, on the joint provision of dictionaries and thesauruses to EQuALLS2 schools; with Microsoft Corporation on ICT training of EQuALLS2 teachers, and the provision of computer software at nominal cost; with McDonalds House of Charities for possible collaboration on a reading program for 1st graders; and with Habitat for Humanity Foundation for on-the-job training and apprenticeships in construction projects in Mindanao for EQuALLS2 trained OSY. Many of these potential GDA possibilities are expected to result in specific GDA partnerships during FY09.

Emerging Challenge

The breakdown in peace talks between the GRP and the MILF in July sparked a violent reaction in some EQuALLS2 sites in August, which flowed into the October-December 2008 quarter. Furthermore, the incidence of kidnapping in Sulu and Basilan targeting workers of development NGOs had a chilling effect on project implementation in those areas, impacting some project targets, such as classroom construction and refurbishment, OSY training, and community capacity building. EQuALLS2 management is taking measures to reduce the impact of these security concerns, but nevertheless, it is expected to impact on timely achievement of project targets.

II. TECHNICAL PROGRAMS UPDATE

Activity progress made in each of the IR technical areas is summarized below, with additional details available in the quarterly reports from EDC's sub grantees, attached as Annexes 2-5.

IR 1: Increasing learning opportunities for children and youth through community support for education and livelihood programming in targeted geographic areas

EDC and its lead implementing partners carried out priority community engagement activities initiated last quarter, aimed at assessing and building LSB & PTCA capacity, preparing for issuance of community grants, based on standard EQuALLS2 guidelines, pushing forward with classroom construction and repair, and working with local partner to further integrate EQuALLS2 interventions at the municipality and barangay levels.

“We are happy that we are part of the Expanded-PTCA, and given the chance to learn more about leadership and responsibility...we share our ideas for school projects.”

*Patricia Alim & Fadzra Hadjirul
Grade 5 students
Taluksangay Elementary School,
Zamboanga City*

Highlights, challenges and next steps for these main IR1 activities are provided below.

A. Organizational Assessment and Capacity-Building for PTCAs and LSBs

The PTCA and LSB Capacity Assessment tool measures capacity to support improvements and quality of education across five general elements: Management and Governance; Education Improvement Planning and Project Management; Financial Management; Networking and Advocacy; and, Tracking and Communicating Educational Performance.

Highlights

- Partners completed organizational capacity assessments for 338 PTCAs and LSBs in EQuALLS2 sites. PTCAs and LSB assessments were distributed across partners, as follows: ELSA – 76, Save the Children – 93, and Synergeia 169.
- Based on capacity assessment results, Save the Children refined its PTCA Organizational Development and Project Management (ODPM) training modules, while the LSB capacity-building training design is still being developed.
- ELSA facilitated Strategic Planning training sessions for 90 PTCAs and Personal Effectiveness and Team Building sessions for 9 PTCAs.
- Synergeia conducted capacity assessments with 139 PTCAs in its mainland municipalities, 19 of which will participate in the Peace Corps-sponsored Project Development and Management (PDM) workshop, scheduled for February.

Assessments were completed using focus group discussions with full PTCAs or LSBs (approximately 15 people in many cases). Reviews indicate that the tool is effective at

measuring capacity, but that many or most PTCAs/LSBs are at the ‘getting started’ level, meaning lower level of capacity. This information is being analyzed and will inform capacity building trainings being rolled out.

Challenges

- A significant challenge for Synergeia is determining how to complete PTCA capacity assessments in the three Sulu municipalities recently disturbed by unstable peace and order conditions in the area. Completion of PTCA and LSB capacity building assessment and subsequent analysis of results, are important prerequisites to implementing PTCA and LSB capacity building training sessions.
- Partners need to finalize and consolidate the assessment results in order to formulate a capacity building baseline and subsequent tracking system for capacity building progress.

Next Steps

- Synergeia will draft an action plan for the completion of PTCA and LSB assessments.
- Save the Children will initiate assessments and subsequent capacity-building sessions for a next batch of PTCAs.
- EDC will facilitate an IR1 TWG meeting for partners to share their respective approaches during education improvement planning and designing PTCA & LSB capacity-building plans.

B. Community Incentive Grants (CIG)

Small grants² management by community education stakeholder institutions is an integral part of ongoing EQuALLS2 community engagement and capacity building, fitting into current municipal, barangay and school planning processes. Community institutions receiving grant support will participate in prerequisite capacity building support during each phase of the grant process.

Highlights

- EDC drafted CIG Guidelines in consultation with partners and OEd during a TWG held in November 2008. The guidelines emphasize the importance of PTCA capacity-building training as a prerequisite to awarding community grants. Likewise, PTCAs will be required to demonstrate the ability to conduct a community education needs assessment as well as show that project implementation and funds management systems are in place, prior to receiving a grant. The CIGs will be focused on providing inputs not currently provided by the project.
- Twenty six (26) ELSA-supported PTCAs are in the planning stage of their priority CIG projects.
- Community education and skills planning is nearly completed with Save the Children’s first batch of 98 barangays, some of which involved valuable participation from community youth.

² EDC’s implementing partners have each allocated \$1,000 USD per community grant in their respective work plans and budgets.

- Save the Children is also working with Barangay and LGU stakeholders to integrate community plans into the overall municipal education and skills plan, which increases the likelihood of securing municipal LGU support for community identified education improvement efforts.

Challenges

- Partners will now need to refine their respective granting mechanisms to conform to the EQuALLS2-wide CIG guidelines.
- Partners need to thoroughly orient stakeholders on the processes and requirements for preparing and administering CIGs, including:
 - a) capacity building for PTCAS
 - b) fund / grant management requirements
 - c) beneficiary organizations needing a legal personality to open a bank account
 - d) required community counterpart to contribute to the proposed project, and to mobilize resources for the other identified projects that may not be supported by the grant
- Ensuring that PTCAs take into consideration the education improvement needs of OSY during the grant planning process, or within school-less barangays, identifying an appropriate community structure that will take on the responsibility of advocating for OSY support.

Next Steps

- Obtain final USAID Agreement Officer's approval on the CIG guidelines,
- Review partners' community grants mechanisms to ensure compliance with the EQuALLS2-wide CIG guidelines.
- Ensure that EQuALLS2-wide project staff and prospective beneficiary groups are fully oriented on the CIG guidelines.
- Ensure that partners' community engagement processes include a participatory education improvement planning processes from the barangay up to the municipal level, and a clear capacity building plan for beneficiary groups specifically in the areas of financial and grants / project management.

C. Integration of EQuALLS2 programming at municipality and barangay levels

Highlights

- ELSA conducted national and field-level coordination meetings with its sub-tier partners to strengthen integration of program interventions at the field level.
- ELSA continued to actively engage LGU support at the municipal level, e.g., LGUs transported BBF books to schools, assured support to LSB and PTCA plans and took care to ensure EQuALLS2 staff safety and security while working in their respective municipalities.
- Save the Children initiated the consolidation of community education and skills plans (CESPs) into the respective municipal education and skills plans (MESP).
- Synergeia conducted re-orientation workshops for various PMTs to strengthen capacity and resolve project implementation issues.

Challenge

- How best to address the Synergeia PMT project structure which has as its core members the Local School Board, expanded to include municipal level agencies, local DepED and PTCAs. While the intention is to use the PMT mechanism to build sustainability of programs from the outset, in reality many of the PMTs face challenges due to weak organizational capacity and a varying ability to implement program activities.

Next Steps

- Synergeia will review its implementation model and focus on strengthening PMT capacity and equipping its field staff to provide PMTs with needed technical guidance.
- Encourage ELSA and Save to share lessons learned from their continued good practices engaging municipal level LGUs.

D. Construction and refurbishment of physical learning facilities

Highlights

- To date, Petron Foundation, with Habitat for Humanity, has constructed 14 classrooms and has refurbished 42 additional classrooms.

“The construction of our new classroom building is a joint effort of EQuALLS2, Petron Foundation and the PTCA. It is the result of ‘bayanihan’ (concerted effort), and we are proud of this project.”

*Thongco Pangolima
E-PTCA President
Datu Pangolima Elementary School,
Malapatan, Sarangani Province*

Challenges

- There is a need for partners to work more closely with Petron/Habitat and provide related information and support for site selection in a timely manner.
- Due to increased security precautions in some areas, field staff movement has been restricted, thus limiting access to schools targeted for classroom construction and repair.
- There were no designated CLCs for Synergeia LIFE classes, which will be further examined during the next review meeting with Synergeia to address potential construction issues.

Next Steps

- Implement agreed coordination arrangements, between lead implementing partners and Petron/Habitat for Humanity including regular meetings involving management and field levels to discuss implementation plans, progress, issues and concerns.
- Synergeia will expedite the identification of community facilities able to serve as CLCs.

IR 2: Strengthening capacity for teaching of English, science and math

Lead implementing partners were fully engaged in implementing Core Training in English, math and science during this quarter. The second course of training for English and math was conducted, and the first course for Science took place. Each cycle of training included stakeholder workshops and meetings to finalize the content of the training, preparation of materials, and training the trainers from each of the partners. The quarter also included one Cycle 6 training for the BEAM-EQuALLS2 Pilot Reading Program. Additionally, lead implementing partners consulted with service providers about planning and implementation of refresher training and supplemental interventions.

A. Core Training Programs

Highlights

EDC continued to coordinate with partners and consultants to ensure that final training designs were appropriate and that trainers were prepared. Specific work with partners, trainers and consultants included discussions on content and topic identification, on the final design of the training, and selection of training materials. During the quarter, over 1900 educators participated in Core Training activities, specifically:

- Training of Trainers was conducted for 52 teachers, professors and instructors from 8 Teacher Education Institutions (local Mindanao universities) and 67 DepED teachers and supervisors. DepED staff monitored and assisted TEI trainers with conducting the training sessions for teacher-mentors.
- 643 teacher-mentors attended the English course 2 training, 782 attended the math course 2 training, and 609 attended the science course 1 training. Course 1 improves the teacher's competencies in English and Course 2 strengthens competencies for facilitating learning of English in the classroom
- EDC continued to work with DepED's NEPP team, and selected Mindanao trainers. As a result of a series of workshops and meetings, a set of course 2 modules was developed for use in English course 2 training. These materials were adopted by NEPP DepED national for use in all other regions of the country.



Tawi-Tawi elementary school teachers (l-r) Jaliha Majinji, Alminda Omar and Nursahaya Hashim actively participated in a National English Proficiency Program (NEPP) Course 2 phonics and word recognition session in Zamboanga City. NEPP includes training modules on English teaching concepts, reading and writing instruction improvement, and mentorship. Fifty one (51) teacher-mentors from the provinces of Basilan and Tawi-Tawi participated in the five-day training from November 24-28, 2008, which focused on reading and writing instruction techniques.

Challenges

- Not all partners participated fully in Training of Trainers. Synergeia was not able to send enough participants to the Training of Trainers and therefore many of the modules prepared for math course 2 and science course 1, as well as English 2 were not followed as agreed in TWGs and TOTs.
- Technical support provided by lead implementing partners during training of trainers and training of teacher-mentors is often focused on administrative and logistical support rather than on program content. Some of the workshop session support to trainers was delegated to non-program staff. Technical program support by lead partners' needs strengthening.
- Especially in the ARMM, some participants in the teacher-mentor trainings did not follow the full training track for each of their subject areas, due to insecurity issues. This will result in the dilution of the expected outcomes for participating in the course as designed, and these teachers will not be able to fulfill the requirements to become mentors.

Next Steps

- EDC will work with partners to identify how they can ensure that mentors get the full package of trainings for their specific content area.
- EDC will work with partners to identify the key types of technical support needed during training sessions and will encourage partners to develop a strategy to provide fuller and more appropriate technical support during the next round.
- The next quarter will focus on the preparations and the conduct of the Training of Trainers for English course 3, math course 3, and science course 2. By the end of the quarter, partners will determine the number of teachers who qualify as mentors (on the basis of having completed the tracks as designed) and will determine which schools will have school-based mentors in each of the subject areas.

B. Refresher Trainings

Refresher trainings are designed to supplement core training courses for former participants. They could repeat topics not fully grasped, delve into more advanced discussions, or address a related topic to improve understanding of concepts discussed in core trainings. This targets core training participants, but is conducted at local, district, or school level. It assumes close monitoring and consultation with trained teachers. Refresher trainings were not conducted this quarter, due to changes in schedule of core trainings. During Quarter 2, partners will submit plans for refresher and supplemental training activities, and refresher training will be conducted in all areas.

C. Training ++ (or Supplemental Activities)

Training ++ are interventions targeting as a priority, teachers who were not given the opportunity to train in the core trainings or become teacher-mentors. For this quarter:

Highlights

- 1,264 teachers from 40 schools of Datu Piang, Lutayan, Mamasapano, and Datu Saudi received math training by Save's trained mentors. Mentors shared learnings in simplifying the teaching of abstract math concepts, using the practical work approach, through the use of manipulatives and other instructional materials developed by UP NISMED. The practical work approach facilitates learning of math and science concepts and develops thinking and process skills through hands-on activities that use concrete materials
- 382 teachers were trained by ELSA mentors in Sto. Nino and Tantangan using the core training materials in English and math.
- Synergeia focused on Core training during this period.

Challenges

- Training ++ is an opportunity for partners to design learning activities that meet the specific needs of educators in the schools in their areas. EDC will continue to work with the partners so that they can move beyond cascade and echo trainings for echo-mentors.
- The implementation of teacher training and other activities towards the end of the school year is always a challenge as local DepED steps up on completion of their own programs and activities, including INSETs, athletic meets, and other extra-curricular activities, as well as other donor activities.

Next Steps

- EDC will work with partners to clarify, strengthen and refine plans for supplemental training activities. This will include on-the-ground consultations, review of assessments data, and interfacing with partners' community facilitator staff who are engaged in community education needs assessment and planning exercises, to determine the specific needs of the educators in the area.

D. EQuALLS2-BEAM Programs

To maximize efficiency and harmonize programming, EQuALLS2 and AusAID's BEAM Project collaborate to develop teachers' vocabulary development, fluency and reading comprehension, and to improve skills in teaching beginning reading: phonics, phonemic awareness, word recognition in the classroom. EQuALLS2 co-funds, assists with logistics, training, and the development of materials.

Highlights

- Collaborative work between EQuALLS2 and BEAM continued during the quarter. Last November, 215 Grades 1 and 2 teachers and 62 supervisors and DepED officials from 24 pilot schools were trained on the course: Reading to Learn. To deliver the course, 21 trainers and 8 mentors were trained to act as resource persons.
- Workshops were conducted to plan for the program-end assessment of the Pilot Reading Program as well as the summer INSET. Preparations for these two major activities included materials development, training design, and selection of trainers/resource persons.

Challenges

- The BEAM 2 project is currently phasing out. Specifically, the in-service component will end by May 2009. EQuALLS2 is assessing inputs on multi-grade training and year 3 of the reading program, but this is pending analysis an agreement between USAID and AusAID for continued collaboration.

Next Steps

- BEAM and EQuALLS2 teams will be jointly monitoring the implementation of the Reading Programs in the schools in the next quarter. The planning for the design of Cycle 7 (program assessment) will also take place.
- Donor-level meetings will be encouraged to clarify possible collaboration mechanisms given the status of BEAM project.

IR 3: Improved relevance and training for out-of-school children and youth (OSCY)

Lead partners continued implementing basic education and workforce development programs for over 11,000 out of school youth during the quarter. Partners reported the following accomplishments for the period October – December 2008:

LIP	OSCY Program Offering	OSCY Participation	
		Completers	In-Progress
IYF/ELSA	Basic Literacy(BL)	758	
	PEPT-Directed	1,210	
	A&E		180
	WFD		117
Save the Children	BLiS		2,669
	TBCST	1,382	30
	STII	356	80
Synergeia Foundation	LIFE	3,842	870
	WFD		75
TOTAL		7,548	4,021

EDC provided technical assistance to lead implementing partners including conducting workshops aimed at enhancing partners’ OSCY programs, further explained below.

A. Basic Education/Literacy

Highlights

- Save the Children’s BLiS program is moving forward with 2,669 learners (representing 92% of those registered at the beginning of the program). Save the Children reported an 8% drop-out due to migration, personal problems and the armed conflict in some areas.
- 1,210 PEPT-directed and 758 Basic Literacy learners completed their Consuelo Foundation-sponsored programs.

- Of the 1,968 combined BL and PEPT learners, 1,411 registered for the PEPT but only 910 actually took the exam on November 23, 2008. Failure of the 501 learners to take the test was due to bad weather (Tawi-Tawi) and/or the peace and order situation (Basilan), others became ill and still others were disqualified due to incomplete documents.
- The 20-day preparatory life skills course, LIFE, which is provided to all Synergeia-assisted OSCY, was completed in October (Sulu ongoing). LIFE builds human and social capital by developing competencies in reading, writing, and communication.

Challenges and Next Steps

- There is a need for Save the Children and ELSA to document promising practices related to the delivery of their respective ALS programs and to document the impact these programs are having on learners' lives.
- Additionally, partners will need to evaluate each round of program implementation of BLiS, LIFE and PEPT-oriented courses in order to document challenges and lessons learned in program design, curriculum content, learning processes, and learner assessment, especially because these are all pilot programs and may well need slight modification and improvement before implementing the next round of programming.
- Synergeia needs to finalize its ALS program mix and associated OSCY / program targets to enable a clear understanding of Synergeia's IR3 work. For example, it appears that Synergeia's LIFE program completers and IMs do not currently understand the next step in the learning process, and next program to be offered.

B. Workforce Development

Highlights

- ELSA continued work force course offerings, focused on Building Wiring Installation (BWI) and Small Engine Repair (SER). The Welding course was delivered through e-learning with borrowed laptops. 18 Welding completers and 15 Massage Therapy completers passed the TESDA administered NCII test.
- 17 training groups with 436 total learners (from 552 registered) continued to attend the Skills Training and Industry Immersion (STII) program sponsored by Save the Children.
- 1,382 completers of the Technology-based Community Skills Training Programs (TBCST) were also reported by Save the Children.
- 75 OSCY started training in wiring and small engine repair.

*"I no longer feel like an outcast.
I am proud of myself now that I
have something to offer to my
community and the society."*

*Michael T. Najera
Finished 180 hours of Welding
Workforce Development Program
Tantangan, South Cotabato*

Challenges and Next Steps

- An 8% decrease in learner enrollment of Save the Children's BLiS program and a 21% decrease in STII program enrollment were due to migration to other places and family/personal problems. There was however an enrollment increase of

approximately 50% in the short term courses (TBCST) and thus Save the Children is studying the feasibility of offering more short term programs rather than the longer 4-5 month programs.

- Partners need to again review their workforce development program offerings to address immediate community needs, such as practical farming skills, vegetable growing & backyard gardening, and fishing.
- Partners need to put in place mechanisms for post training assistance to education and workforce development program completers.

C. Instructional Manager Training

Highlights

- 81 ELSA-supported IMs attended training to enhance their facilitation skills. Trainings provided included: e-skills training, SFL/LSE and ARH, psychosocial and stress debriefing, training and assessment methods.
- Likewise, Save the Children conducted a follow-up training for 51 IMs and 85 newly-hired YLFs.
- Two (2) and 28 Instructional Managers/YLFs participated in EDC-led workshops on Data Management and Utilization of BBF Books as Supplementary Materials, respectively.

Challenges and Next Steps

- Partners need to further identify IM training priorities to better enable IMs to effectively deliver their various program offerings.

D. EDC Technical Assistance

Highlights

- EDC facilitated two workshops on the *Use of BBF Books as Supplementary Materials*: November 17-18, 2008 in Cotabato City and December 11-12, 2008 in Zamboanga. The workshops' main objective was to orient IMs on how to use BBF books to enrich facilitation of ALS topics, lessons and activities. Approximately 75,000 books were provided to IMs to take back with them from the workshops for use in their respective CLCs.
- Save the Children was able to secure LGU support to transport books from the EDC training venue back to the various CLCs, using vehicles from the LGUs. JSOTF also pitched in and transported several loads of books to additional CLCs, which was greatly appreciated.

Challenges and Next Steps

- Books earmarked for Synergeia CLCs have not yet been delivered as EDC is still waiting for Synergeia to designate CLCs where books can be kept securely.
- EDC will monitor how well books are being used by participating CLCs and IMs continually be invited to shop for books in the EDC warehouses in order to supplement learning materials linked to their OSCY programs.

E. Technical Working Group Meetings

Highlights

- EDC facilitated an IR3 TWG in October, focused on validating partners' OSCY program framework, course offerings and targets.
- Additionally, the TWG meeting addressed the DAP test-retest procedure, the IM competency assessment tool and technical audit tool.

Next Steps

- The lead implementing partners expressed appreciation of the TWGs as an effective avenue for sharing experiences and lessons learned as well as the disseminating important EQuALLS2 information. EDC will continue conducting TWG meetings at least once every quarter.

Materials and Technology (Cross-Cutting Activities)

This was a particularly dynamic quarter for EQuALLS2 materials and technology work, which included:

- Presentation to DepED, USAID and project partners of the EQuALLS2 ICT roll-out plan for teacher focused ICT computer training.
- Distribution of more than a quarter of a million books during two large scale Mindanao book fairs.
- Distribution of audio English learning materials to further enhance EQuALLS2 support to the National English Proficiency Program.

A. ICT Computer Training for Teachers

Highlights

- In December, EDC presented the EQuALLS2 ICT plan to DepED with an emphasis on the plan's close alignment with DepED's ICT4Education strategy. (ICT briefing document and power point presentation attached as Annex 7.
- 5 potential EQuALLS2 ICT sites were identified, including: Malapatan, Midsayap, Zamboanga City, Jolo, and Bongao.
- ICT planning discussions were facilitated with Malapatan stakeholders (Provincial Governor's ICT team, Malapatan mayor, DepED division superintendent and district supervisor) and with Jolo stakeholders (including the mayor) to gauge interest and commitment to ICT training for teachers.
- A meeting was conducted with the National Computing Center in Zamboanga City to explore partnership possibilities.
- Follow-up meetings with Microsoft Philippines were held to discuss the parameters of a partnership agreement scheduled to be signed next quarter.

Next Steps

- A Memorandum of Agreement will be developed and signed with Malapatan stakeholders early next quarter.

- A Memorandum of Agreement will be developed and signed with Microsoft Philippines early next quarter, ideally with the American Ambassador signing on behalf of USAID / EQuALLS2.
- Meetings with key stakeholders in Midsayap, Bongao, and Zamboanga will be scheduled to gauge interest and commitment in developing the ICT initiative in those three target municipalities.
- Lead implementing partners will be engaged to develop an ICT component action plan in selected municipalities.
- The ICT teacher training content will be further developed in partnership with Microsoft and local DepED stakeholders, with training to begin in April or May 2009.

B. Book Fairs

Highlights

- The inaugural EQuALLS2 book fair, which involved the distribution of 56,000 books and teaching materials for teachers from 83 schools in region 12 and the ARMM took place at Notre Dame Marbel University in October.
- A second, much larger book fair involved the distribution of over a quarter of a million books and teaching materials for 348 participating teachers from 103 schools (representing Zamboanga City, Sulu, Basilan, Isabela City, and Tawi-Tawi), was held at Tetuan Elementary School in Zamboanga City in November. This high profile event was opened by the American Ambassador, USAID Mission Director, and Zamboanga City Mayor.
- The new demand driven approach to book distribution, structured to allow teachers to “shop” for their own books generated excitement and the endorsement of both teachers and DepED administrators.
- LGUs stepped up to cover the cost of transporting books from the book fair venue back to participating schools.

“We...have many targets to accomplish. With the support of EQuALLS2, hopefully we can improve the academic performance of the region in English, science, and math. The availability of more books can greatly improve academic instruction, and this will help us improve our standing.”

*Walter Albos
DepED Region 9 Director*

Challenges and Lessons Learned

- Organizing book fairs proved to be a major logistical undertaking. Moving thousands of books from EDC warehouses to book fair venues required intensive ground preparation, staff time, and labor. Proper planning, with clear assignment of tasks and sufficient lead time for a full gamut of preparations, is essential in order to ease staff’s work load.
- Fully engaging lead implementing partners in the planning process was challenging because the book fair model is still so new. Systems and procedures for packing

books and allocating *shopping points* per school were continuously fine tuned in order to maximize efficiency and overcome various logistical.

- Due to the high volume of teachers attending the book fairs, teachers were only allowed a limited time to shop for their books. Several teachers and schools requested for longer time to shop and browse the books.

Recommendations

- Look for ways to minimize the logistical demands placed on project staff during the organizing of book fairs. One concrete recommendation is to hold future book fairs at the EDC warehouses, which would eliminate the major logistical challenge of transporting thousands of books to an offsite venue while also allowing teachers more time to shop and browse books at their convenience.
- Increase the level of involvement by lead implementing partners to facilitate them planning and managing future book fairs. Key responsibilities for the partners to take on would include, organizing teachers to come to the warehouses, orienting teachers on the point system, allocation of points per school, and providing introductory trainings on how to use the books.

Next Steps

- Save the Children is proposing to conduct a book fair at the Zamboanga warehouse in January, 2009 to serve teachers from Zamboanga Peninsula schools. This will provide an excellent learning opportunity for both EDC and Save the Children in determining respective roles and responsibilities when organizing book fairs.

C. Audio Books

Highlights

- 60 sets of high quality BBF-donated audio books were distributed by Save the Children to selected schools in their areas.
- 130 accompanying audio cassette players were procured in November and will be distributed to schools selected to pilot the audio books as part of improved approaches to English language instruction.
- NEPP mentors were oriented on the use of audio books this quarter as well.

Next Steps

- Distribution of additional audio books and cassette players will be completed next quarter.
- Follow-up training on the use of audio books will be conducted during additional teacher training events next quarter.
- A system for tracking the usage and effectiveness of audio books will be developed with partners.

III. SUB GRANT MANAGEMENT

The EDC sub grants management team focused on the following main items during the quarter:

- Review of Partners’ Year 2 Annual Workplan and Budgets
- Financial Monitoring and Compliance visits
- Review of Partners’ July to September Quarterly Progress Reports
- Review of Partners’ Monthly Financial Reports and Fund Requests

Partners’ Year 2 Annual Workplans and Budgets

Following Partners’ Year 1 self-assessment and Year 2 planning, annual workplans and realigned budgets were submitted. The approval of the Y2 annual workplans and budgets led to modifications of the existing subgrant agreements. Modifications of the following sub-grantees were approved / signed by EDC on the following dates:

Subgrantees	Date Approved/ Signed
Save the Children	November 25, 2008
Synergeia Foundation	November 6, 2008
Petron Foundation	December 11, 2008

Financial Monitoring and Compliance Visits

EDC conducted financial monitoring and compliance visits to review Partners’ July-September 2008 financial transactions to determine: i) validity and accuracy of utilization of project funds; ii) adequacy of internal control system surrounding management of project funds, and; iii) compliance with subgrant agreement terms and conditions, USAID rules and regulations, and local laws. Further information is located in the table below:

Sub-grantees	Dates of Reviews / Visits	Highlights
IYF/ELSA	Financial reviews were not conducted this quarter. Co-reviews scheduled in next quarter during home office backstopper’s visit.	Not applicable.
Save the Children	October 2-3, 23-24, 27-31, 2008 for both Manila and Davao Offices	Minor findings on project disbursements due to lack of supporting documents were noted. These documents were either in-transit from vendors or Save’s field offices and will be resolved soon.
Synergeia Foundation	October 7-17, 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EDC identified inadequate documentation and lack of approvals on some expenses, some being disallowed. EDC provided assistance with supporting document requirements to avoid disallowance and to clear expenses. • EDC reviewed status of prior quarter findings. • A formal exit meeting with Synergeia was held on December 18, 2008 attended by DCOP. • Resolution of findings for follow-up in next quarter’s review.

Sub-grantees	Dates of Reviews / Visits	Highlights
Petron Foundation	November 12, 2008	No audit findings were noted during the review.

In addition to financial reviews and compliance visits, the following activities were conducted:

- Year-end inventory review conducted in Save the Children’s field office in Midsayap to review completeness of inventory listing and visual identification of commodities purchased with project funds.
- EDC jointly monitored six (6) School Improvement Grants project in Midsayap to assess the implementation process as well as review financial transactions. A monitoring report was generated after the visit and shared with Save the Children.

Partners’ Quarterly Progress Reports

EDC reviewed Partners’ July-September 2008 quarterly progress reports and analyzed Partners’ spending against planned activities and budgets. The analysis was consolidated with technical assessments into a feedback document released to partners and discussed in a one-on-one Partners’ meeting.

Partners’ Financial Reports

The grants team conducted a careful review of sub grant partners from October to November invoices and reconciliation reports before forwarding on to EDC-HQ for a second level review and recording. EDC continues to pay close attention to sub grantee spending patterns per major cost category against field monitoring of physical accomplishments. Additionally, sub grantee monthly cash advance requests were reviewed to ensure reasonableness and accuracy, before recommending release of funds from EDC HQ.

IV. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

EDC provided technical guidance to partners in the administration and data analysis of the Developmental Assets Profile tool for tracking improvements in OSCY learning. We also provided technical assistance to Synergeia in the administration of the PTCA capacity assessment tools. For the period under review, very intensive effort was put into the development of the EQuALLS2 M&E system commissioned to the Diliman Network Solutions, service provider for this purpose.

Summary of Project Accomplishments vs. Targets

The table on the next page illustrates project accomplishments as of quarter 1 of FY09 (Y3) on FACTS indicators. Data is based on the EDC annual targets based on partners’ AWP, and the percentages of accomplishments for this quarter are based on partners QPRs.

FACTS Indicator Table for Q1 FY09

FACTS Indicator	LOP Target³	Y3 Target	Q1 Acc	% Achieved Q1/Y3
Number of Classrooms repaired with USG-assistance	480	140	11	8%
Number of classrooms constructed with USG-assistance	120	40	2	5%
Number of CLCs refurbished	400	179	2	1%
Number of PTCAs or similar “school” governance structures supported	700	560	338	60%
Number of administrators and officials trained (e.g. in school finance, management or governance)	2,238	938	440	47%
Number of teachers/educators trained with USG support	24,000	13,700	2,854	21%
Number of textbooks and other learning materials provided with USG-assistance	1,800,000	350,000	296,000	85%
Number of OSCY learners enrolled in basic education programs	80,000	16,678	3,719	22%
Number of persons participating in USG-funded WFD programs	20,000	9,598	302	3%
Number of IMs/YLFs trained	377	322	217	67%

PTCA Capacity Assessment Tool

- EDC, in collaboration with Synergeia staff, conducted a 2-day workshop on the PTCA capacity assessment tool on December 11-12, 2008. Site coordinators and selected IMs from mainland municipalities administered the tool and participated in the workshop, which addressed the legal mandate of PTCAs, the rationale and mechanics for administering the tool, and action planning for field administration.
- Synergeia administered the tool to 139 PTCAs starting in December 2008.

M&E TWG Meeting

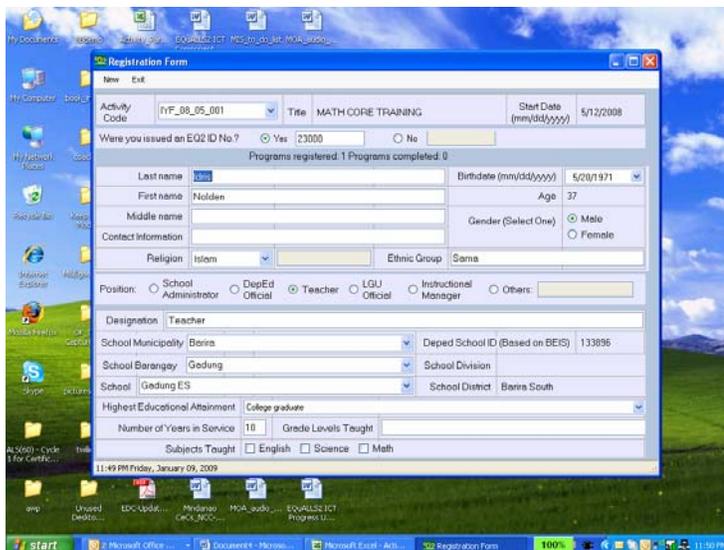
- EDC conducted a M&E TWG meeting on October 2, 2008 to re-orient partners on project performance indicators and to clarify partners’ programs, approaches and targets across the IRs.
- It was agreed that partners will finalize and submit their respective targets on the strategic (FACTS or strand 1) and program accountability (strand 2) indicators.

³ FACTS Indicator targets are currently being discussed and clarified with USAID and modified targets will appear in subsequent reports.

- It was also agreed that EDC will review the data needs for reporting on each of the indicators across the IRs and develop capture forms as appropriate.

Management Information System

From October to December, programming work on the M&E database system was ongoing. The contractors, Diliman Associates, met with partners' M&E staff on October 15 to present the initial design of the system and to gather feedback on the system's usability. A couple of design suggestions made by partners were incorporated into the system. It was also during that meeting that we identified a crucial piece of work that was not originally part of the contractors' terms of reference. This additional work entailed the bulk importation of data gathered by partners during the previous quarters. This way, the system will be updated at the time of its launch in February of 2009. Diliman Associates was asked to do this additional work of designing and developing a system to transfer data from partners' existing system to the new M&E database. In December, partners were asked to validate their data and a deadline was set for them to submit their data for importation.



A sample EQuALLS2 MIS screen for entering data.

DAP Tool

The Developmental Assets Profile Tool is used as an evaluation tool for tracking OSCYs participating in ALS and livelihood offerings. It is designed to track change over time of 8 asset categories: Support; Empowerment; Boundaries and Expectations; Constructive Use of Time; Commitment to Learning; Positive Values; Social Competencies; and, Positive Identity. The context areas are Personal, School, Social, Community and Family. Data has now been collected across the two 'times' which will lead to analysis and conclusions to better inform the offerings to OSCY.

- Round 1 of the DAP survey targeted 2,600 learners.

Lead Partner	Target	Time 1	Time 2
IYF/ELSA	650	707	567
Save the Children	1,300	1265	726
Synergeia Foundation	650		
Total	2,600	1,972	1,293

- ELSA completed its T1 and T2 administration of the DAP survey in December. Save also completed T1 and T2 administration of the DAP in some of its sites in December. The Round 1 data from both partners will be sent to the consultant for data clean up and initial analysis and interpretation.
- Synergeia has yet to implement a 3-month or more program for the DAP to be administered to its learners.
- EDC conducted a 2-day workshop for lead partners on DAP Data Management in November 27-28, 2008, with EDC Senior Adviser David James-Wilson as facilitator. The workshop covered topics on ensuring data quality, data analysis, and partners' sharing of their experiences in using the results of T1 DAP survey. Save and ELSA recognized the usefulness of the DAP survey and plan to administer the tool to 100% of learners.

V. PROJECT OPERATIONS

A. Outreach & Communications

EDC's Outreach and Communications team remained highly active in producing press releases, weekly highlights and other communications products. More detailed descriptions are as follows:

- Launched EQuALLS2 video on YouTube.
- Published ten (10) EQuALLS2 exposure articles national newspapers and Mindanao's regional papers, with sixteen (16) news stories and photo essays published online.
- Submitted fourteen (14) weekly highlights to USAID Philippines.

Several events occurred this quarter, including US Ambassador Kenney's visit to Jolo, Sulu, turn-over of USAID-Petron classrooms in Tawi-Tawi, two (2) book fairs which distributed 296,000 English, science, and math books to more than 600 teachers from Mindanao's regions 9 and 12, and the ARMM, and the General Assembly of the League of Mayors in the Philippines.

EQuALLS2 organized high profile events including US Ambassador Kenney's visit to Jolo, Sulu on October 14, 2008 where she demonstrated the value of village reading activities among elementary students at Mohammad Tulawei Elementary School. USAID-Petron also turned over newly constructed classrooms in Panglima Arasia Elementary School in Tawi-Tawi, Mindanao on October 21, 2009. US Deputy Chief of Mission to the Philippines Paul Jones led the ceremony.

EQuALLS2, through its Global Development Alliance partnership with Brother's Brother Foundation, gave English, science, and math books to more than 300 elementary school teachers from Mindanao's Region 12 from October 27 to 28, 2008. USAID Philippines OEd Chief Tom Crehan also turned over math and National English Proficiency Program (NEPP) learning kits to schools. In the Zamboanga book fair, US Ambassador Kristie Kenney led the distribution of English, science, and math books to 348 teachers representing 103 elementary schools in Western Mindanao on November 24, 2008. During the event, class activities

showed teachers how the books can be used to aid improving skills for English, science, and math.

EQuALLS2 participated in the general assembly of the League of Municipalities of the Philippines (LMP), which highlighted USAID and the Philippine's Local Government Units (LGUs) from November 19 to 21, 2008 in Manila. The event, joined by more than 1,500 mayors from all over the country, provided USAID the opportunity to showcase longstanding US government's support to a range of social and economic development programs. President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, US Ambassador Kristie Kenney and USAID Philippines Mission Director Jon Lindborg also attended this national event.

Please refer to Annex 1 for a full range of Weekly Highlights, published articles and other communication products.

B. Administration and Human Resources

Human Resources

Recruitment resulted in hiring 9 project staff this quarter, based in Cotabato and Zamboanga: 2 office managers, 2 communication officers, 2 warehouse coordinators, 2 administrative assistants, and 1 driver. Staff orientation was held in Manila on November 7-8, 2008. The first day of orientation provided a background of EQuALLS2's various programs, and EDC's personnel, administrative, and financial policies and procedures. USAID procurement regulations, practices, and procedures were thoroughly discussed on day 2.

A two-day strategic planning meeting for EDC staff was conducted on December 14-15, 2008 in Davao City. During the first day, management staff discussed key tasks for Year 3, as well as implementation themes, roll-out strategies, and a general flow of project schedule, commencing January 2009. On the second day, all EDC personnel participated in planning and team building sessions.

New warehouse

EDC identified the need to change warehouses due to the ongoing threat of flooding (as occurred in Q3 of FY08, destroying 100,000 books). A different warehouse, located near Cotabato City, will be operational for books fairs and storage of BBF books and other materials by January 2009.

Procurement

The Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) approved USAID's request for the VAT-exempt purchase of 8 Ford Everest vehicles for EQuALLS2. The vehicles, to be used for project implementation in Mindanao, were delivered in December 2008 to end-users: EDC (2 units), IYF (2), Save the Children (3), and Synergeia (1). All 8 vehicles have been titled to USAID. EDC and partners have formalized agreement about the extent of each partner's responsibilities including annual registration, procurement of insurance policy, liability to passengers and third parties in case of accidents, and proper safekeeping.

On November 4, 2008, USAID approved to waive geographical code 000 and to purchase 33 motorcycles locally for EDC sub-grant partners' field operations. The motorcycles will be distributed to IYF (8 units), Save the Children (14), and Synergeia (11) upon receipt. However, there are problems with VAT exemption, as BIR requires a pro-forma invoice from the vendor indicating VAT-exempt prices in order to process VAT exemption. The vendor selected from the competitive bidding refused to present the required invoice, as with other vendors, unless a VAT exempt certificate (VEC) is presented by EDC. EDC has requested Honda Philippines' assistance in finding a vendor willing to provide an invoice that indicates VAT-exempt prices, and this will be further researched to identify solutions.

C. Security

During the October-December 2008 period, EDC took appropriate measures to ensure security of its staff, offices and other assets in view of the continuing security threats from bombing incidents; continuing kidnapping threats and actual incidents particularly in Basilan and Sulu and the actual and continuing outbreak of clashes between the MILF and GRP forces in August and September, that continued in October to December. These security threats and incidents resulted in the suspension (though on a limited time scale) of some project activities at one point affecting 13 of the 39 EQuALLS2 sites at the height of the security incident build up. Though limited in geographic scope and duration, these disruptions resulted in some shortfalls in achieving project targets, particularly in classroom construction and repair, out-of-school youth reach, community mobilization, and teacher training.

Pursuant to EDC's regular security planning, and in view of these heightened security incidents, EDC undertook the following measures during the quarter:

- Further refined its Security Preparedness Plan, and closely monitored staff travel. A security arrival briefing kit was also prepared for expatriate staff and consultants visiting project sites
- Intensified its day to day security monitoring activities and accessing security updates both from USAID and other sources (such as the UN system and partners such as Save the Children)
- Shared security updates with USAID and other partners
- Provided security awareness training for EDC staff, and facilitated the participation of other partners' staff in well designed security training (primarily of partner Save the Children).

VI. FY 2009 QUARTER 2 WORKPLAN SUMMARY

The following table indicates major activities for the second quarter of FY09.

Program Component	Activities	Implementing Partner/Org	Dates
IR 1	TWG meeting to facilitate sharing of partners' experiences on how the assessment results were used to design capacity building modules, and partners' overall progress in their community engagement activities	All partners EDC technical team and IR1 senior advisor	March
	Meeting to finalize community incentive grants mechanisms	Synergeia, EDC technical team and IR1 senior advisor	March
	Technical assistance to Synergeia in the administration of the tools	Synergeia	March
	Conduct field visits and observation of partner community engagement processes as part of regular quality assurance monitoring. Partner key activities expected are the following: Barangay school board formation and PMT strengthening (Synergeia) Capacity-building trainings of PTCAs and CIG processes (Save and ELSA) PTCA and LSB assessments (Synergeia)	IR1 team	January-March
	Conduct research on IR1 learning agenda: global practices on participatory community engagement and capacity building of local organizations. and description of capacity building programs developed by lead partners based on	IR1 Team EDC Senior Advisers	Feb-March

Program Component	Activities	Implementing Partner/Org	Dates
	results of assessments		
	Conduct assessment of SIG projects as part of closure of Save's transition year contract	IR1 team and Grants team Save the Children	Jan-Feb
	Conduct/participate in meetings on classroom construction and rehabilitation	EDC, Partners, Petron and Habitat for Humanity	Jan-March
IR 2	Training of Resource Persons, BEAM-EQuALLS2 Summer INSET	EDC	Feb 10-12
	Supervise and provide technical assistance to Training of Trainers, Science 2	EDC	Feb 26-28
	Supervise and provide technical assistance to Training of Trainers, Math 3	EDC	March 12-14
	Provide guidance and monitor Refresher Trainings	Partners	Jan - March
	Provide guidance and monitor Training ++	Partners	Jan - March
	Provide technical assistance to BEAM-EQuALLS2 INSET TOT for ARMM	EDC	March 2-6
	Preparations for Program Evaluations: IMPACT and BEAM-EQuALLS2 Reading Program – Development of Tools and Guidelines	EDC	March
Materials and Technology	Provide supervision and support to conduct of book fairs, book shopping and related book distribution events	EDC, Partners	Jan - March
	Meetings with stakeholders of proposed ICT hubs on their commitment to this undertaking	EDC, Partners	Jan-March
	Prepare MOAs with LGUs and DepED for establishment of ICT hubs	EDC, Partners	Jan-March
IR 3	Conduct rapid assessment of selected sites	EDC, Synergeia	January

Program Component	Activities	Implementing Partner/Org	Dates
	Facilitate meeting to finalize overall IR3 framework and targets	EDC Synergeia	March
	Provide technical assistance to LIPs re DAP	EDC, Consuelo and Synergeia	Jan-Feb
	Monitor the conduct of ALS programs of LIPs	EDC, Partners	Jan - March
	Monitor the conduct of IMs and YLFs training programs	EDC, Partners	Jan - March
	Monitor the utilization of BBF books in the ALS programs	EDC, Partners	March
	Conduct TWG with focus on IR3 monitoring tools	EDC, Partners	March
	Finalize arrangements for the TA of IR3 consultant	EDC	March
M&E	Provide technical assistance to partners re data migration to the M&E database system	EDC, LIPs	January-March
	Conduct M&E TWG meeting with focus on the database system	EDC, Partners and Service provider	February
	Review and validate targets and accomplishments of partners and total EQ2	EDC	February
	Provide technical assistance to partners on the DAP Data for transmittal to Consultant	EDC, Partners	January-March
	Mid-term Review Preparations	EDC	February-March
	Comparative and International Education Society Conference Preparations (Conf late March)	EDC and Partners	February-March
Outreach and Comm	USAID-DepED Affirmation of Commitment Signing Ceremony (USAID Affirms US\$86 Million Commitment to Education Quality in Mindanao)	EDC, Peace Corps and DepED	January
	Website consolidated calendar template launching	O&C team and DCOP	February

Program Component	Activities	Implementing Partner/Org	Dates
	New constructed classrooms turn over in Datu Pangolima ES, Malapatan, Sarangani., Mindanao	USAID, DepED, Sarangani LGUs, and Petron officials	February
	ICT initiative launching at Datu Pangolima Elementary School in Sarangani, Mindanao.		February
	OSYs graduation	Synergeia, EDC, and USAID officials	March
	O&C Partners TWG meeting	O&C Team, DCOP, & Partner O&C	March
Grants Management	Quarterly financial reviews (covering Oct-Dec '08)	EDC with Partners	Jan-Feb
	Field level observation or assessment of selected Partners' activities on the ground	EDC with Partners	Jan-March
	Grants TWG meeting	EDC	March
	Continuation of closure of Save the Children's Transition grant (ended Oct. 31, 2008)	EDC and Save the Children	Jan-Feb
	Providing assistance to LIPs for the capacity building activities of PTCAs/LSBs e.g. financial management as they roll-out the community grants	EDC	Feb-March

Annex 1

Annex 1

EDC/EQuALLS Quarterly Report
October - December 2008

Outreach and Communications Quarterly Summary Highlights

1. Weekly Highlights (October-December 2008)

The following 14 Weekly Highlights were submitted to OEd/USAID during the quarter. A number of these articles that have high development impact were selected by the USAID Director, Jon Lindborg to be released by USAID Philippines for the Administrator's Weekly (USAID Washington).

Title	Dates
USAID trains English mentors in Mindanao	September 29 – October 3, 2008
USAID trains 30 out-of-school youth (OSY) on commercial cooking in Zamboanga City	October 6-10, 2008
US Ambassador engages communities in Mindanao to Read to children	October 13-17, 2008
GDA partnership produces results and new classrooms in Mindanao	October 20-24, 2008
USAID gives 56,000 books to Mindanao schools through book fair	October 27-31, 2008
USAID builds leadership and peace-building skills in 58 Mindanao youth	November 3-7, 2008
USAID achieves youth workforce and livelihood impact with youth in Mindanao	November 3-7, 2008
USAID increases employment opportunities for out-of-school youth in Mindanao	November 10-14, 2008
USAID-AusAID partnership strengthens Madrasah education in Mindanao	November 10-14, 2008
USAID fosters peace-building youth leadership in Mindanao	November 10-14, 2008
National convention highlights successful USAID-LGU partnerships	November 17-21, 2008
USAID gives 280,000 books to school children in Mindanao	November 24-28, 2008
USAID helps children participate in education improvements	December 1-5, 2008
USAID eases impact of violence and conflict with workforce skills in Mindanao	December 8-12, 2008

2. News Articles published with local and national press during the quarter

Ten (10) news articles and photo essays were released and published in the national daily newspapers and Mindanao's local papers.

Title	Date Published	Description/Type	Name of Newspaper
Mindanao to receive books worth \$80 M from USAID	October 30, 2008	News release	Manila Bulletin
USAID conducts training for math, science teachers	November 1, 2008	News release	Manila Bulletin
USAID, Petron donate 2 classrooms for Tawi-Tawi	November 06, 2008	New release	Manila Bulletin
A quarter-million books to benefit schools in the south	November 24, 2008	News release	Zamboanga Today
USAID's EQuALLS2 distributes 250,000 books at Zambo book fair	November 25, 2008	News release	Zamboanga Today
250-T books distributed to 103 Mindanao schools	November 25, 2008	News release	Manila Bulletin

US Ambassador's visit to Zamboanga city	November 25, 2008	Photo essay	The Philippine Star
US ambassador's visit to Zamboanga	November 26, 2008	Photo essay	Daily Zamboanga Times
USAID donates 1.8 M books to Mindanao schools	December 02, 2008	News release	Manila Bulletin
USAID helps to integrate Madrasah schools in mainstream system	December 7, 2008	News release	Manila Bulletin

3. News articles published in websites.

Sixteen (16) news articles and photo essays were published online by various websites of news agencies and other organizations.

Title	Date Published	Description/Type	Address of website
Casualties of War: A personal look at how out-of-school youth in war-torn areas embraces life's challenges	October 3, 2008 October 12, 2008	Feature	www.reliefweb.int www.pia.gov.ph www.businessmirror.com.ph
EQuALLS2 donates books, educational materials to Mindanao's depressed schools	October 28, 2008	News Release	www.pia.gov.ph www.balita.ph
Tagalog News: Book fair isinagawa ng Equalls2 (EQuALLS2 holds book fair)	October 29, 2008	News release	www.pia.gov.ph
EQuALLS donates 56,000 books to 84 elementary schools in Region 12	October 30, 2008	News release	www.balita.ph
Quality education for pupils and livelihood training for OSYs pushed	October 30, 2008	News release	www.pia.gov.ph
Mindanao to receive books worth US\$80 M from USAID	October 30, 2008	News release	www.articlearchives.com
Tagalog News: EQuALLS namahagi ng 56,000 aklat sa 84 paaralang elementary sa Region 12 (EQuALLS distributes 56,000 books to 84 elementary schools in Region 12)	October 30, 2008	News release	www.pia.gov.ph
Cebuano News: De-kalidad nga edukasyon sa mga bata ug livelihood training alang sa mga OSY gipanghingusgan (Quality education for schoolchildren and livelihood training for OSY pushed)	October 31, 2008	News release	www.pia.gov.ph
Ilonggo News: 84 ka buluthuan sa Region 12 nakabenipisyo sang mga libro (84 elementary schools in Region 12 benefit from books)	October 31, 2008	News release	www.bomboradyo.com/ilonggo
War's biggest casualty: education	November 01, 2008	News Feature	www.inquirer.net

Story Books	November 3, 2008	Photo essay	www.sarangani.gov.ph
US Ambassador Kristie Kenney leads book fair opening in Zambo	November 23, 2008 November 23, 2008	News release News release	www.pna.gov.ph www.lazambongaprensa.com
Filipino school children in Southern Zamboanga	November 24, 2008	Photo essay	www.gettyimages.com
USAID donates 281,000 books to schools	November 24, 2008	News release	www.abs-cbnnews.com
250-T books distributed to 103 Mindanao schools	November 25, 2008	News release	www.articlearchives.com
Mindanao schools to receive books	November 25, 2008	News release	www.bworldonline.com

4. List of High-Level PR events (October-December 2008)

Events	Dates	Officials Present
Village Reading in Jolo, Sulu	October 14, 2009	Amb. Kristie Kenney, USAID Mission Director Jon Lindborg, OEd Chief Tom Crehan; Gov. Sakur Tan of Sulu and other LGU officials
Classroom Turn Over, Bongao, Tawi Tawi	October 21, 2009	US Deputy Chief of Mission Paul Jones, USAID Mission Director Jon Lindborg, OEd Chief Tom Crehan, Bongao Mayor and other LGU officials, PBSP Director Margie Moran
1 st EQuALLS2 Book Fair in Koronadal, Sultan Kudarat	October 27-28, 2008	DepED Regional Director Luz Almeda USAID OEd Chief Tom Crehan
National Convention of the League of Mayors of the Philippines (LMP)	November 19-21, 2008	President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo US Ambassador Kristie Kenney USAID Mission Director Jon Lindborg
EQuALLS2 Zamboanga Book Fair	November 24, 2008	US Ambassador Kristie Kenney USAID Mission Director Jon Lindborg Zamboanga City Mayor Celso Lobregat USAID OEd Chief Tom Crehan DepED Regional Director Walter Albos



Village Reading

Jolo, Sulu Province
October 14, 2008



US Ambassador to the Philippines Kristie Kenney visited Jolo, Sulu Province to demonstrate the value of reading. Through implementing partner Synergeia Foundation, EQUALLS2 Project aims to make village reading a staple in the yearly activities of schools in Mindanao, highlighting the community's role in the learning development of children.





USAID-PETRON Classroom Turnover

Bongao, Tawi-Tawi
October 21, 2008



US Deputy Chief of Mission to the Philippines, Paul Jones led the inauguration of a new two-classroom building in Panglima Arasia Elementary School in Tawi-Tawi. The project is jointly funded by USAID and Petron Foundation, implemented through EQuALLS2 Project. USAID and Petron will construct 120 and rehabilitate 480 classrooms in the next three years.





1st EQuALLS2 Book Fair

Koronadal, Sultan Kudarat
October 27-28, 2008



USAID gave 56,000 books to more than 300 teachers during the 1st EQuALLS2 Book Fair held in Koronadal, Sultan Kudarat. The English, science, and math books amount to US\$1.4 million and are part of the Global Development Alliance partnership between EQuALLS2 Project and the US-based Brother's Brother Foundation.





National Convention of the League of Mayors of the Philippines

Manila, Philippines
November 19-21, 2008



The partnership programs of USAID and several Philippine Local Government Units (LGUs) were among the highlights of the LMP general Assembly. US Ambassador to the Philippines Kristie Kenney and USAID Mission Director Jon Lindborg attended the event. EQuALLS2 Project participated in the exhibit which showcased USAID's initiatives to promote better quality education and livelihood skills development in Mindanao.





EQuALLS2 Zamboanga Book Fair

Zamboanga City
November 24, 2008



USAID placed 280,00 books, valued at US\$11 million, in the hands of schoolchildren in Mindanao through the EQuALLS2 book fair in Zamboanga City. US Ambassador Kristie Kenney opened the event in which 348 teachers representing 103 schools English, science, and math books for free. The book fair was organized in partnership with the Department of Education, ELSA, and Save the Children.





USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



EDUCATION QUALITY AND ACCESS FOR LEARNING AND LIVELIHOOD SKILLS

WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS

September 29-October 3, 2008

USAID trains English mentors in Mindanao

40 teachers, English Supervisors, and professors from teacher education institutions in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao and Regions 9 and 12, completed a five-day National English Proficiency Program Training of Trainers (NEPP TOT), conducted by USAID's Education Quality and Access for Learning and Livelihood Skills (EQuALLS2) Project in September. These mentors will be deployed in their respective areas and schools to cascade the information to public elementary school teachers who will further cascade this on to fellow teachers at the school level. USAID's EQuALLS2

Project has been assisting DepED address the problem of declining quality of education in conflict-affected and impoverished regions in Mindanao by increasing access to quality education, reviving community support to schools and providing professional development for teachers in core subjects such as English, science, and math. The NEPP TOT trainings give teachers a chance to explore effective teaching innovations to improve student performance in English language.



Elementary school teachers practice English word recognition and vocabulary development exercises with their fellow teacher-trainers during training under the National English Proficiency Program.



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EDUCATION QUALITY AND ACCESS FOR LEARNING AND LIVELIHOOD SKILLS

WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS

October 6-10, 2008

USAID trains 30 out-of-school youth (OSY) on Commercial Cooking in Zamboanga City

USAID's Education Quality and Access for Learning and Livelihood Skills (EQuALLS2) project through its implementing partner, Save the Children, has forged partnership agreements with local vocational schools and local government units to conduct Skills Training and Industry Immersion (STII) programs for OSY. The first batch of 30 OSY in Zamboanga City, Western Mindanao is undergoing a 3-month training on commercial cooking from September to December this year. The program includes on-the-job training in partner hotels and restaurants to help the youth gain experience and value their new found skills. The EQuALLS2 project works with private-public sector alliances to help youth in Mindanao



This OSY intends to open a small canteen or restaurant after some training and industry exposure provided by USAID's Education Quality and Access for Learning and Livelihood Skills (EQuALLS2) Project. Simple dreams such as hers are now within the reach of many OSY in Mindanao.

to be productive and responsive and helpful to their families and communities. Trade skills such as carpentry, plumbing, baking, and cooking have been identified as needed by existing industries in the local community.



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EDUCATION QUALITY AND ACCESS FOR LEARNING AND LIVELIHOOD SKILLS

WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS

October 13-17, 2008

US Ambassador Engages Communities in Mindanao to Read to Children

US Ambassador to the Philippines, Kristie A. Kenney, demonstrated the value of village reading activities in Jolo, Sulu Island, in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) on Tuesday, October 14, 2008, part of USAID's Education Quality and Access for Learning and Livelihood Skills (EQuALLS2) Project. Surrounded by parents, teachers, and village leaders, the Ambassador read a story to children at the Muhammad Tulawie Central School to promote reading and encourage creativity, imagination and learning. Through its implementing partner, Synergeia Foundation, and local government units, the EQuALLS2 Project aims to make village reading a staple in the yearly activities of schools in Mindanao, highlighting the community's role in the learning development of children. Ambassador Kenney also turned over more than 80 children's books on reading, math and science to the school. Sulu Governor Sakur Tan and Jolo Mayor Hussin Amin led local government officials and residents in expressing appreciation for USAID's assistance to Sulu, particularly in improving basic education.



School children of Muhammad Tulawie Elementary School in Sulu are fully engaged by US Ambassador Kristie A. Kenney as they listen to her read a story entitled, 'The Magic Mat'.



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EDUCATION QUALITY AND ACCESS FOR LEARNING AND LIVELIHOOD SKILLS

WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS

October 20-24, 2008

GDA Partnership Produces Results and New Classrooms in Mindanao

US Deputy Chief of Mission to the Philippines, Paul Jones, led the inauguration of a new two-classroom building in Panglima Arasia Elementary School in Tawi Tawi, Mindanao, on October 21, 2008. The project is jointly funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and Petron Foundation and implemented through the Education Quality and Access for Learning and Livelihood Skills (EQuALLS2) Project. USAID and Petron will construct 120 and rehabilitate 480 classrooms in the next three years to help alleviate classroom shortages and improve access to basic education in conflict-affected areas of Mindanao. As of October 2008, 12 new classrooms have been constructed and 42 have been refurbished by the project. New and refurbished classrooms will be provided with water, electricity, desks, teachers' tables and chairs, blackboards, cabinets, fans, clocks, and toilets.



Children of Tawi-Tawi, Mindanao and Paul Jones, US Deputy Chief of Mission to the Philippines, celebrate the inauguration and opening of a new two-room classroom, built by USAID and Petron Foundation.



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EDUCATION QUALITY AND ACCESS FOR LEARNING AND LIVELIHOOD SKILLS

WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS

October 27-31, 2008

USAID Gives 56,000 Books to Mindanao Schools through Book Fair



300 teachers browse and choose from the 56,000 (USD\$1.4mil) books at the USAID Book Fair in Mindanao.

USAID gave 56,000 books to 300 teachers in Koronadal, Mindanao, on October 27-28, 2008. The new books amount to USD\$1.4 million and are part of the Global Development Alliance Partnership between the USAID-funded Education Quality and Access for Learning and Livelihood Skills (EQuALLS2) Project and the US-based Brothers' Brother Foundation. At the event, teachers from 80 public schools in Region 12 were given book credits and shopped from 15,000 titles, ensuring the unique needs of schools were met. Teachers were encouraged to pick sets of books so that students can equally share learning during classroom activities. Additionally, math and National English Proficiency Program (NEPP) learning kits were formally turned over by Tom Crehan, USAID Philippines' Chief of the Office of Education, to schools during the fair.



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EDUCATION QUALITY AND ACCESS FOR LEARNING AND LIVELIHOOD SKILLS

WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS

November 3-7, 2008

USAID Builds Leadership and Peace-Building Skills in 58 Mindanao Youth



A diverse group of In and Out-of-School Youth develop leadership and peace-building skills at the USAID-funded leadership camp in Tawi-Tawi, Mindanao.

USAID built leadership and peace-building skills through a series of workshops with 58 youth leaders in Tawi-Tawi, Mindanao, October 6-10, 2008. The Youth Civic Engagement leadership camp is an initiative of the USAID-funded Education Quality and Access for Learning and Livelihood Skills (EQuALLS2) Project, and implemented by EQuALLS2 partner, the Education and Livelihood Skills Alliance (ELSA). The camp develops leadership potentials of in and out-of-school youth, builds trust, cohesion, and tolerance, and prepares youth in pursuing peace-building, good governance, and social development initiatives in their communities. Similar leadership trainings will be conducted in conflict-laden North and South Cotabato, and remote Basilan.



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EDUCATION QUALITY AND ACCESS FOR LEARNING AND LIVELIHOOD SKILLS

WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS

November 3-7, 2008

USAID Achieves Youth Workforce and Livelihood Impact with Youth in Mindanao



A graduate of USAID's workforce program applies his carpentry skills during an immersion session in conflict-affected Midsayap, North Cotabato. He now earns P5,000 per month by manufacturing and refurbishing furniture in his community.

USAID-trained youth carpenters continue to provide professional services to the surrounding communities of conflict-affected Midsayap, North Cotabato, Mindanao, three years after their graduation. Their continued work demonstrates the effectiveness of their training through the Skills Training and Industry Immersion (STII) component of the USAID-funded Education Quality and Access for Learning and Livelihood Skills (EQuALLS2) Project. Shortly after graduation in March 2006, the graduates formed a workforce guild, tasked to refurbish 21 EQuALLS2 Community Learning Centers (CLCs) in five neighboring municipalities. The carpenters manufactured sets of furniture, which included blackboards, teacher's table, cabinet, learner's tables and 10 bench seats. Several businesses and community members have expressed interest to secure the services of the guild. This, and other workforce skills like this, forms a central part of the livelihood component of the EQuALLS2 Project, currently being implemented.



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EDUCATION QUALITY AND ACCESS FOR LEARNING AND LIVELIHOOD SKILLS

WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS

November 10-14, 2008

USAID Increases Employment Opportunities for Out-of-School Youth in Mindanao

State Department Senior Country Coordinator for the Philippines, Nicholas Higgins, and USAID officials observed 60 Out-of-School Youth (OSY) engaged in commercial cooking and sewing initiatives in Zamboanga City, Mindanao on November 13, 2008. Thirty of the OSYs are enrolled in the Skills Training and Industry Immersion (STII) commercial cooking course at Ayala Technical Vocational School, which includes on the job training in local businesses, 80% of which lead to employment. The other 30 OSY are engaged with Technology-Based Community Skills Training (TBCST) sewing courses at the Community Enterprise Development Service Facility in Tetuan. Both training interventions are implemented by USAID's Education Quality and Access for Learning and Livelihood Skills (EQuALLS2) Project through lead implementing partner, Save the Children, in partnership with the Philippine's Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), and Department of Education (DepED).



Nicholas Higgins (right) watches as OSY Frederick Veras (leftmost) and Dionisia Quisay, training instructor, sew a bag, providing livelihoods for these working youth.



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EDUCATION QUALITY AND ACCESS FOR LEARNING AND LIVELIHOOD SKILLS

WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS

November 10-14, 2008

USAID-AusAID partnership strengthens Madrasah education in Mindanao



Students at an Islamic School (madaris) in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) actively participate English, science and math curriculum, a reality after the USAID-AusAID partnership.

USAID's partnership with the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID) produced results as six private Islamic elementary schools (*madaris*) integrated English, science, and math subjects into their basic *Madrasah* curriculum, then were awarded with permits to operate in the conflict-ridden Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), on November 8, 2008, in Cotabato City, Mindanao. USAID, through its Education Quality and Access for Learning and Livelihood Skills (EQuALLS2) Project, and AusAID's Basic Education Assistance for Mindanao (BEAM) Project, provided the schools with technical support in the form of trainings, professional consultations, and additional educational materials which resulted in the granting of permits to operate from the Philippine's Department of Education (DepED). USAID and AusAID jointly assisted in integrating English, science, and math subjects in the basic *Madrasah* curriculum in 20 identified pilot Islamic schools in Mindanao. Earlier this year, the

EQuALLS2 and BEAM partnership delivered education interventions for Muslim Mindanao and developed a database survey which determined the status and needs of the region's *Madrasah* education. These forms of assistance helped in the implementation of the standard curriculum for Mindanao's private *madaris*.



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EDUCATION QUALITY AND ACCESS FOR LEARNING AND LIVELIHOOD SKILLS

WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS

November 10-14, 2008

USAID Fosters Peace-Building Youth Leadership in Mindanao

USAID sponsored fifty (50) in and out-of-school youth (OSY) from conflict-ridden Basilan, Mindanao to attend a five-day Young Leaders Camp in Zamboanga City. The diverse group included Muslims and Christians, with an equal percentage of boys and girls, and is an initiative of the USAID-funded Education Quality and Access for Learning and Livelihood Skills (EQuALLS2) Project, implemented by Education and Livelihood Skills Alliance (ELSA) and the Ayala Foundation. Key peace-building activities include civic leadership, good governance, democratic process, collaboration, cooperation, and hard skills like project management and proposal development. The camp increases the awareness of young leaders on local issues, particularly those that are education-related, and for them to be able to actively contribute towards positive change in their communities.



Tom Crehan (right), USAID Office of Education Chief, speaks with teenagers (l-r) John Roderick Tolentino, Cecille Marie Villarin, and Carlito Hipolito Layos, to better understand their unique backgrounds and ideas on how they can help build more peaceful and healthy communities in Mindanao.



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EDUCATION QUALITY AND ACCESS FOR LEARNING AND LIVELIHOOD SKILLS

WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS

November 17-21, 2008

National Convention Highlights Successful USAID-LGU Partnerships



US Ambassador to the Philippines Kristie Kenney is accompanied by members of the League of Municipalities of the Philippines (LMP) at the exhibit opening of the league's general assembly at the Manila Hotel. Behind Ambassador Kenney is the event's host, Manila City Mayor Alfredo Lim.

The successful partnership programs of USAID and several Local Government Units (LGUs) of the Philippines were among the highlights of the general assembly of the League of Municipalities of the Philippines (LMP) from November 19 to 21 2008, at the Manila Hotel. The event, participated in by more than 1,500 mayors from all over the country provided excellent opportunity for USAID to showcase longstanding US government's support to a range of social and economic development programs carried out by USAID and its partner LGUs. An exhibit, participated in by the USAID-funded Education Quality and Access for Learning and Livelihood Skills (EQuALLS2) Project displayed to the public USAID's support and initiatives to promote better quality education and livelihood skills development in the poorest provinces of Mindanao, and those severely affected by armed conflict. US Ambassador to the Philippines Kristie Kenney opened the

exhibit and delivered for the first time a solidarity message to an assembly. USAID Philippines Mission Director Jon Lindborg joined Ambassador Kenney in the event. President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo keyed the convention and stressed the need of the LMP to work on local solutions to national and global issues on food security, climate change, local economic development, and peace and security.



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EDUCATION QUALITY AND ACCESS FOR LEARNING AND LIVELIHOOD SKILLS

WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS

November 24-28, 2008

USAID gives 280,000 books to school children in Mindanao

USAID placed 280,000 books, valued at USD\$11 million, in the hands of school children in Mindanao, through the Education Quality and Access for Learning and Livelihood Skills (EQuALLS2) Project's book fair on November 24, 2008 at the Tetuan Central Elementary School in Zamboanga City. US Ambassador Kristie Kenney officially opened the book fair, where 348 teachers, from 103 schools, shopped for English, science and math books that reinforce these subjects in the classroom. During the event, class activities showed teachers how the materials can be used to aid in improving skills for English, science and math. The book fair was organized in partnership with the Department of Education, Save the Children and Education and Livelihood Skills Alliance (ELSA), partners of EQuALLS2. USAID will place 1.8 million books in 741 schools across Mindanao by 2011.



US Ambassador Kristie Kenney shops for English books with Reyna Joyce Barutu, Grade 6 teacher from Malamawi Central Elementary School in Isabela City. The book fair uses a market and demand-driven approach, highlighting choice by teachers, to ensure that the right books go to schools that need them most.



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EDUCATION QUALITY AND ACCESS FOR LEARNING AND LIVELIHOOD SKILLS

WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS

December 1-5, 2008

USAID Helps Children Participate in Education Improvements



Small voice, big difference. Farida, a Grade 5 student leader of Bagumba Elementary School, in conflict-affected Midsayap, reads a proposed project's goals and objectives to her E-PTCA.

USAID helped in- and out-of-school children and youth participate in education planning and project implementation in their schools and communities in eight 'Expanded Parent-Teacher Community Association' (E-PTCAs) in conflict-affected Midsayap, Mindanao from December 2-4 2008. The activities were conducted through the USAID-funded Education Quality and Access for Learning and Livelihood Skills (EQuALLS2) Project, by implementing partner Save the Children. Currently, 27 E-PTCAs have received capacity building courses designed to increase E-PTCAs' education governance, management, advocacy skills and to promote child and youth participation in education improvement and community development. Small-scale projects, such as school supplies distribution and sports equipment purchase, are planned and implemented by children involved with the E-PTCAs. By completing these planning courses, an E-PTCA fulfills part of the requirements to receive a Community Incentive Grant (CIG) of \$1,000 from USAID to fund identified priority projects.



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EDUCATION QUALITY AND ACCESS FOR LEARNING AND LIVELIHOOD SKILLS

WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS

December 8-12, 2008

USAID Eases Impact of Violence and Conflict with Workforce Skills in Mindanao



Preparing for a better future. Ryan, an out-of-school youth and evacuee from conflict-ridden Maguindanao Province overcomes conflict and violence by focusing on new skills.

USAID provided workforce skills to 190 internally displaced out-of-school youth (OSY) in conflict-affected Maguindanao Province, Mindanao. The USAID-funded Education Quality and Access for Learning and Livelihood Skills (EQuALLS2) Project, through implementing partner Save the Children, conducted livelihood and skills trainings from October 20 to November 27, 2008, which included developing masonry, small engine mechanics, carpentry, baking, welding and bag-making skills. The Local Government Unit (LGU) of Mamasapano assisted by adding US\$1,700 in construction supplies and funded the purchase of tools and materials. Support was also given by the LGU to 35 youths and adults in the area for a weeklong skills and enterprise training on baking. OSYs gain new skills as well as experience positive reinforcements as they learn income-generating knowledge and abilities, which eases the impact of conflict.



U.S. Embassy Deputy Chief of Mission Paul Jones gets acquainted with students of the Panglima Arasia Elementary School in Bongao, Tawi-Tawi during a break in the October 21 ceremony where he and Petron Vice President Jose Jesus Laurel turned over to the school two classrooms that were built under a partnership between the USAID and the oil company Petron, in collaboration with Habitat for Humanity. During the same visit to the Mindanao province, Mr. Jones and Tawi-Tawi Governor Sadikul Sahali also led the groundbreaking for the U.S. government-assisted project to improve the runway of the Sanga-Sanga Airport in Bongao and for a multi-million peso bridge-road partnership project, and inaugurated the renovated classrooms of Lapid Lapid School in Bongao. (Click on the picture to view the photo gallery.)

Mindanao

Mindanao to receive books worth \$80 M from USAID

Agency head says donation not affected by US crisis

By BONG REBLANDO

KORONADAL CITY, South Cotabato — The intended donation of some \$80 million worth of books for Mindanao would go on despite the economic crisis affecting the United States (US), an official of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) said.

"We are not affected by this economic crunch plaguing the US and the world now. Our project to support Philippine education would go on," Tom Crehan, Office of Education chief of USAID, said.

He said the \$80 million worth of books, consisting of Mathematics, English and Science subjects, are donated to the USAID by the Brother's Brother Foundation.

Crehan said the program covers the period 2008 to 2011 for the three regions in Mindanao - the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, Regions 9 and 12.

USAID shouldered the cost of shipping the books from the U.S. to Mindanao, like the 56,000 books now on

display at a book fair here in the city.

Recently, Crehan, Kevin Corbin, Educational Quality and Access for Learning and Livelihood Skills 2 (Equalls2) deputy chief of party, led in turning over some worth P68-million of books to about 84 schools in Cotabato City, North Cotabato, Sarangani, South Cotabato, and Sultan Kudarat.

Another book fair, Crehan said, would be launched in Zamboanga City in November.

This would be followed by book fair activities in Jolo, Tawi-Tawi and Cotabato City.

Crehan also emphasized that the ongoing skirmishes between government troops and militant faction of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) will not affect the education program of USAID-Equalls2.

Under this scheme, Crehan said teachers of beneficiary schools will undergo separate mentors' training sessions at NDMU for English, Science and Math subjects.

During the book fair, teachers will

be given time to shop for books on behalf of their schools.

However, the agency told the teachers that the books are not for their personal use but must be shared with other teachers in their respective schools.

"The shopping scheme allows teachers to shop or choose the kind of books they need in teaching or school libraries to ensure that the books are used," Crehan stressed, noting that in previous donations, some books have remained unused or stayed "brand new."

"We don't set any condition in donating these books and other education materials, except that the students and teachers must use it. If they don't, we opt to give those books to other beneficiaries who are willing to use it," Crehan said.

Meanwhile, the Department of Education in Central Mindanao and Equalls2 regional coordinator Pancho Balawag accepted the books in behalf of the teachers and school administrators in simple rites at Notre Dame of Marbel University library here.

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Across the NATION

Text us your feedback: inquirer_atn_name/age/city/message_to_2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart) Assistant Editor **Tony Bergonia**

USAID exec says RP education system hasn't improved

KORONADAL CITY—THE PHILIPPINE educational system has failed to improve compared to those of other Asian countries, a ranking official of a US fund agency said.

Tom Crehan, education office chief of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), said this has saddened him because 40 years ago, the country's educational system was one of the best in the region.

"You know, there is no doubt that the education system in the

Philippines, at one point, 40 years ago, was one of the best systems in the region. But nowa-

days, not anymore," Crehan said during the distribution of P68 million worth of books at the Notre Dame of Marbel University here on Tuesday.

The Philippines was one of the top destinations for Asian students in the past. It was here where Thais, for example, learned about rice production technologies.

But while Thailand became a major rice exporter, the Philip-

pines continued to buy the staple from other countries.

Early this year, President Macapagal-Arroyo admitted that the state of education continues to worsen.

Her admission came in the wake of a report from the Department of Education (DepEd), which said that only 60 percent of elementary school teachers tested for English proficiency for the school year 2006-2007 passed.

In the case of secondary education teachers, it was worse

with only 20 percent of them passing.

Crehan said he would not want to speculate on why the Philippine educational system lags behind but added it was not yet too late for efforts that could help it improve.

"I don't want to speculate on specific reasons but if we all work together, hopefully we can cope up," he said.

Crehan said they acknowledge that people working for the improvement of the country's educational system "have

lots of strong programs and ideas."

In Davao City, Dr. Alicia Sayson, vice president for academic affairs of the University of the Immaculate Conception, said one of the reasons why the country's educational system continues to worsen is the DepEd's penchant to spend on useless projects.

"Once the project is consumed the project dies down," she said. *Jeffrey Matem and Rizalene Acas, Inquirer Mindanao*

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250-T books distributed to 103 Mindanao schools.

Publication: [Manila Bulletin](#)

Date: **Tuesday, November 25 2008**

ZAMBOANGA CITY -- Some 250,000 books valued at more than \$ 10 million were distributed yesterday by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) through a book fair to 103 elementary schools in Western Mindanao as part of its commitment to help improve the [education](#) sector in the

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[King Edward VI School](#)

Independent Co-Educational Day School based in Southampton, Hants

www.KingEdwards.org.uk

south.

US Ambassador to the Philippines Kristie Kenney, together with USAID Mission Director Jon Limborg, City Mayor Celso Lobregat and Department of Education (DepEd) Region-IX officer-in-charge Walter Albos led the Book Fair opening ceremony at Tetuan Central Elementary School in Barangay Tetuan, this City.

Some 348 teachers from USAID-Education Quality and Access for Learning and Livelihood Skills (EQUALLS2) supported schools were

invited to shop for free English, math and science books and other educational materials that are relevant to their needs and will reinforce the teaching of these subjects in their schools.

Kenney held a story telling session among grade school children of Tetuan Central Elementary School.

Class demonstrations were also conducted to show teachers how various [learning](#) materials provided by EQUALLS2 project are used to aid in improving reading skills for English as well as in concept building for science and math subjects.

Last month, some 56,000 books were given to teachers in Central Mindanao also through a book fair held in Koronadal City.

EQUALLS2 aims to distribute a total of 1.8 million books with a total worth of \$80 million to over 740 schools across Mindanao.

The book fair is organized by EQUALLS2 and implementing partners Save the Children and Education and Livelihood Skills Alliance (ELSA). EQUALLS2 also works in collaboration with the DepEd in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.

The book fair is a component of the core interventions of EQUALLS2 aimed at increasing access to quality education for elementary schoolchildren, and relevant learning and livelihood skills [training](#) for out-of-school youth in Mindanao.



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84 ka buluthuan sa Region-12 nakabenipisyo sang mga libro

10/31/2008 7:53:46 AM

KORONADAL CITY-Nakabenipisyo sa 56 mil nga mga libro ang 84 ka mga buluthuan sa elementarya sa Region-12 nga ginpanghatag sang Education quality and Access for Learning and Livelihood Skills 2 okun EQUALLS2.

Nagapanguna nga tinutuyo sang EQUALLS2 ang pagpadasig sa pagtuon sa mga nagatuon sa tagasa ka mga buluthuan nga nakabenipisyo.

May kaangntanan sini, gintambungan sang mga English, Science kag Math mentors ang book fair sa isa ka nakilal-an nga unibersidad sa syudad sang Koronadal.

Nahibaluan nga ginabulubanta sa tres mil ka mga manunudlo ang nagtambong sa nasambit nga book fair nga nagikan sa mga probinsya kag syudad nga ginalakipan sang South Cotabato, Cotabato Province, Sultan Kudarat kag Sarangani Province, Koronadal City, Tacurong City, Kidapawan City kag General Santos City.

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Vol. XXII, No. 87
 Tuesday, November 25, 2008 | MANILA, PHILIPPINES

FREE PREVIEW**The Nation****Mindanao schools to receive books**

ZAMBOANGA CITY — The United States government will distribute less than two million books to schools in Mindanao, said officials of a US-funded program.

US ambassador to the Philippines Kristie A. Kenney, who led the "book fair shopping" under the \$80-million Education Quality and Access for Learning and Livelihood Skills (EQuALLS2) that runs until 2011, gathered over 250,000 books for distribution to students in the island.

Joel C. Espejo, EQuALLS2 outreach and communication manager, said they expect to exceed the targeted total of 1.8 million books for distribution until 2011.

"The coupon system is to equally spread out the books," Mr. Espejo said.

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Casualties of war : A personal look at how out-of-school youth in war-torn areas embrace life's challenges



Anniversary Issue

SUNDAY, 12 OCTOBER 2008 18:21

DATU SAUDI AMPATUAN, Maguindanao—It is not unusual to meet six to seven orphans in a gathering of 30 youths in this town that has been tormented by sporadic armed clashes and family feuds. At a recent skills training for out-of-school youth sponsored by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Education Quality and Access for Learning and Livelihood Skills (EQuALLS2) project, this similar story about the youth was heard and unfolded better opportunities for them.

This stronghold of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front has witnessed numerous clashes between Muslim rebels and government forces. Thousands have perished. This long, fierce armed conflict has damaged the so-called self-worth of community folk, especially unskilled women who were left behind and unable to fend for their children.

These orphans are now grown up, and with a family provider missing, they make up a significant percentage of the out-of-school children and youth (OSCY) in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), which holds the record for having the largest number of OSCY in the country.

According to the Annual Poverty Indicator Survey of the National Statistics Office in 2002, the count was more than 1 million or 23 percent out of the country's total 4.84 million OSCY among the population aged six to 24 years.

A test too early

Naima was in Grade 3 when her father died. She had to stop attending school to help her mother care for her six siblings. For months, her mother tried to sustain the family by working as a laundrywoman in the village. But Naima, being the eldest in a brood of seven, was eventually compelled to work as a housemaid in Cotabato City to assist with the family income. Now 15 years old, she wants to go back to school to complete her elementary education, but worries that it might prevent her being able to provide for the family.

Franzen, like his cousin Taya, is another orphan. Franzen did not carry the brunt of providing for the family. The seventh among 10 children, he saw three of his elder brothers and sisters go to work as domestic helpers in Saudi Arabia. But due to lack of guidance and unstable financial support, Franzen and Taya, now both in their 20s, did not finish high school.

For lack of skills, the boys did various odd jobs to support themselves. They both know they will have to find a stable job once they start families of their own. Naima, on the other hand, yearns to do more than work as a housemaid for life. The training—a week of short courses on baking and food-processing—stirred those hopes to life.

"These boys and girls come here without any expectation. Some of them have given up on life. What makes them come back for another session is this new feeling that they can do something to better their lot," says food-processing trainer Raihan Diocolano, an on-call specialist of the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (Tesda) in ARMM.

Tested by fate and circumstances at an early age, Naima, Franzen and Taya share a common outlook toward education. Because a college degree seems too elusive, they want to arm themselves with technical skills in hopes of landing a job that will promise a better life.

The USAID-EQuALLS2 project provides a 10-month alternative learning system for OSCY in selected towns of ARMM and Regions 9 and 12, combined with livelihood skills training and industry immersion.

With Tesda as an EQuALLS2 partner, its program technicians and specialists are able to train and empower youths with one or two technical skills that they choose themselves. There are a variety of trainings to choose from such as carpentry, masonry, electrical house wiring, cell-phone repair, T-shirt printing, automotive repair, fashion-jewelry making and cosmetology.

"It is important that the choice is based on the socioeconomic conditions of their town," stated Junie Dumawal of Save the Children, the implementing organization for the EQuALLS2 project in Datu Saudi Ampatuan, which has a population of only 27,000. Save the Children makes it a point to involve the whole community in decision-making, such as with Department of Education officials, local government unit representatives, barangay leaders and parents.

Emanicipating, empowering Muslim girls

Datu Saudi Ampatuan was carved out of the old town of Datu Piang, historically considered the center of Islamic civilization in Maguindanao. Women in this town are required to wear the tondong or head scarf, better known as the hijab in Islamic terms, when they are in public. Contrary to what others think, the tondong symbolizes modesty, not exclusion from community events, education and economic activities.

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In a simple graduation ceremony, who would miss the sight of three girls in a crowd of more than 40 boys? Unmindful of hijab dangling on their shoulders, they manage to demonstrate their carpentry skills with ease.

Noraida, the youngest at 15, said she wanted to learn carpentry skills because she wants to repair broken furniture or build small ones for their home. Her friends Norhana and Nasria, both 16, already had basic carpentry skills because both of their fathers are local carpenters.

All three dropped out of school due to financial constraints. Noraida is now working in a furniture shop while Norhana and Nasria continue to assist their fathers in their own carpentry shops. With newly honed carpentry skills they can now do "plaining," a process by which carpenters get rid of uneven surfaces by running a machine called a "plainer" on the lumber. They also apply varnish on the finished products to achieve a shiny surface.

Noraida will stand to earn P250 a day, while her two friends working for the family will help save on labor cost, thus increasing the margin for profit. The three girls, however, still would like to go back to school and earn their college degrees.

"I don't want to burden my family for my education so I want to get skilled and support myself through college," said Noraida, who was in second year high school when she dropped out.

While the main prospects for employment have always been the Middle East, Noraida said it's only a stepping stone. "Once I've saved enough, I will come back here and expand my father's furniture shop or maybe put up my own business," she added.

The USAID's EQUALLS2 project aims to improve basic education competencies for 100,000 out-of-school children and youth by enhancing the capacity of instructional managers to deliver alternative learning system programs and offering livelihood skills and work-force development through partnerships with private sector/industries in ARMM, and Regions 9 and 12. For the next three years, EQUALLS will construct or renovate 400 community learning centers that will serve as classrooms and training centers for the OSCY across the three regions.

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February 10, 2009 Source: Foreign Central Bank Websites



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EQuALLS donates 56,000 books to 84 elementary schools in Region 12

October 30, 2008 5:46 pm by [pna](#)

COTABATO CITY, Oct. 30 — Eighty-four elementary schools in region 12 are the lucky recipients of 56,000 English, Math and Science books from Education Quality and Access for Learning and Livelihood Skills 2 (EQuALLS2) to accelerate learning among elementary pupils.

In a book fair held on October 27 to 28 at the University Library, Notre Dame Marbel University, Koronadal City where 300 teachers from Cotabato City, North Cotabato, Sarangani, South Cotabato and Sultan Kudarat were attending English Science Math mentors training sessions, it was made clear to them that the books are not for their personal use but must be shared with other teachers in their schools.

Aside from region 12, other recipients of the books from EQuALLS2, donated by the Brother's Brother Foundation, are region 9 and Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.

In the same book fair, Tom Crehan, chief, Office of Education, USAID Philippines, declared: "Our challenge

is to get the right book into the right schools.”

He continued: “We all believe that thru education, there will be prosperity in Mindanao and thru prosperity, there will be stability in Mindanao and with this peace and happiness, I want to thank you all for caring about the next generation. I want to thank all our partners who collectively made these all work. I want to assure you that this is not the last book fair.

He added: "This will keep on becoming better and more relevant. With all our efforts together, the Mindanao in 2025 will be a better Mindanao than 2008.” (PNA)

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EQuALLS2 donates complementary books, educational materials to Mindanao's depressed schools

October 28, 2008 10:48 am by [pna](#)

GENERAL SANTOS CITY, Oct. 28 — The Education Quality and Access for Learning and Livelihood Skills (EQuALLS2) project has organized its 1st book fair aimed at making the lives of teachers and students in depressed schools in select regions in Mindanao significantly better.

The book fair will opened Tuesday at the University Library of Notre Dame of Marbel University (NDMU).

The books, which were donated by the Brother's Brother Foundation, are intended for the schools in Region 9, 12, and the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM).

“EQuALLS2 has been finding ways to make the donated books from the Brother's Brother Foundation more

relevant to the needs of schools in Regions 9, 12, and in ARMM,” the organization said in a statement.

The donated books serve as complementary educational materials for teachers and students.

One approach EQuALLS2 takes is identifying books that can be integrated into teacher trainings, it said.

EQuALLS2 believes that “by integrating the books into a training session, teachers are able to see and explore various ways they can use the books to complement their teaching.”

Another approach, it revealed, which the teachers themselves suggested, is to make sure that a school/teacher classroom gets multiple copies of a book.

According to teachers, EQuALLS2 further said that one advantage of having multiple copies of a particular book is that students can have their own copy even at the ratio of two students is to one book.

Based on this insightful feedback, EQuALLS2 organized its warehouses to group same title books together and bundle them in groups of 20-30 copies per title, Miriam Pahm, Director for Technical Programs, EQuALLS2 Project, said.

The book fair is expected to provide “teachers the opportunity to pick books” that may help strengthen their skills in delivering the best education to their students.

Some 300 teachers from Cotabato City, North Cotabato, Sarangani, South Cotabato, and Sultan Kudarat schools are expected to participate in the book fair.

The teachers’ attendance will also enable them to avail their English Science Math (ESM) mentors training sessions.

“Teachers will be given time to shop for books on behalf of their schools at the book fair,” Pahm said.

EQuALL2 also “made clear to teachers that the books are not for their personal use but must be shared with other teachers in their schools.”

For the transport of the books that teachers selected, Petron under the Education Livelihood Skills Alliance (ELSA) has pledged to shoulder the cost of the transport of books to the different school beneficiaries.

Dr. Luz Almeda, regional director, Department of Education (DepED) Region 12 is elated for the book donation saying that it is timely for school children particularly in depressed areas and affected by armed skirmishes whose formal education has been temporarily halted. (PNA)

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US Ambassador Kristie Kenney leads book fair opening in Zambo

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Zamboanga City (PNA) — The United States government, through the United States Assistance for International Development (USAID), is providing some 250,000 books valued at more than US\$ 10 million (PhP490 million) through a book fair slated on Monday to some 103 elementary schools in Western Mindanao as part of the US commitment to bolster the education sector in the southern Philippines.

U.S. Ambassador to the Philippines Kristie Kenney, together with USAID Mission Director Jon Linborg, Mayor Celso Lobregat, and Department of Education (DepED) Regional Director Walter Albos, will lead the Book Fair opening ceremony at the Tetuan Central Elementary School in this city.

Some 348 teachers from USAID-Education Quality and Access for Learning and Livelihood Skills (EQuALLS2) project supported schools were invited to shop for free English, Math, and Science books and

other educational materials that are relevant to their needs and will reinforce the teaching of these subjects in their schools.

During the ceremony, Kenney will hold a storytelling session among grade school children of Tetuan Central Elementary School.

Class demonstrations will also be held to show teachers how various learning materials provided by EQuALLS2 project are used to help improve reading skills for English as well as in concept building for science and math subjects.

Last month, 56,000 books were given to teachers in Central Mindanao also through a book fair held in Koronadal City.

EQuALLS2 aims to distribute a total of 1.8 million books with a total worth of US\$ 80 million (Php3.9 billion) to over 740 schools across Mindanao.

The book fair is organized by EQuALLS2 along with implementing partner Save the Children and Education and Livelihood Skills Alliance (ELSA).

EQuALLS2 is also being implemented with the collaboration with the Department of Education (DepED) and DepED in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.

The book fair is a component of the core interventions of EQuALLS2 aimed at increasing access to quality education for elementary schoolchildren, and relevant learning and livelihood skills training for out-of-school youth in Mindanao. (PNA)

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Mindanao to receive books worth \$ 80 M from USAID.

Publication: [Manila Bulletin](#)

Date: **Thursday, October 30 2008**

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KORONADAL CITY, South Cotabato -- The intended donation of some \$80 million worth of books for Mindanao would go on despite the economic crisis affecting the United States (US), an official of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) said.

"We are not affected by

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this economic crunch plaguing the US and the world now. Our project to support Philippine [education](#) would go on," Tom Crehan, Office of Education chief of USAID, said.

He said the \$ 80 million worth of books, consisting of Mathematics, English and Science subjects, are donated to the USAID by the Brother's Brother Foundation.

Crehan said the program covers the period 2008 to 2011 for the three regions in Mindanao - the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, Regions 9 and 12.

USAID shoulders the cost of shipping the books from the U.S. to Mindanao, like the 56,000 books now on display at a book fair here in the city.

Recently, Crehan, Kevin Corbin, Educational Quality and Access for [Learning](#) and Livelihood Skills 2 (Equalls2) deputy chief of party, led in turning over some worth P68-million of books to about 84 schools in Cotabato City, North Cotabato, Sarangani, South Cotabato, and Sultan Kudarat.

Another book fair, Crehan said, would be launched in Zamboanga City in November.

This would be followed by book fair activities in Jolo, Tawi-Tawi and Cotabato City.

Crehan also emphasized that the ongoing skirmishes between government troops and militant

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Mindanao to receive books worth \$ 80 M from USAID.

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fraction of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) will not affect the education program of USAID-Equalls2.

Under this scheme, Crehan said teachers of beneficiary schools will undergo separate mentors' training sessions at NDMU for English, Science and Math subjects.

During the book fair, teachers will be given time to shop for books on behalf of their schools.

However, the agency told the teachers that the books are not for their personal use but must be shared with other teachers in their respective schools.

"The shopping scheme allows teachers to shop or choose the kind of books they need in teaching or school libraries to ensure that the books are used," Crehan stressed, noting that in previous donations, some books have remained unused or stayed "brand new."

"We don't set any condition in donating these books and other education materials, except that the students and teachers must use it. If they don't, we opt to give those books to other beneficiaries who are willing to use it," Crehan said.

Meanwhile, the Department of Education in Central Mindanao and Equalls2 regional

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INQUIRER MINDANAO

Inquirer Mindanao : War's biggest casualty: education

By Yul "Adil" Olaya
Mindanao Bureau

Posted date: November 01, 2008

"All wars, just or unjust, disastrous or victorious, are waged against the child."—Eglantyne Jebb, Save the Children Founder

DATU PIANG, Maguindanao, Philippines—It's the 59th disaster day," says Eduardo Diestro, information officer of Datu Piang, Maguindanao, talking about the ongoing war in his town that started on Aug. 20.

A seemingly endless massing of troops, air strikes, bombardments and ground military operations against the band of Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) Commander Umbra Kato have displaced more than 65,000 individuals from Datu Piang, Datu Saudi, Mamasapano, Kabuntalan in Maguindanao, Midsayap and Aleosan in Cotabato.

Toll

Diestro said it has been 59 days since 4,652 pupils in Datu Piang have been deprived of access to quality education. It is the same number of days also that children have been vulnerable to various harm and diseases, especially in their living conditions inside their plastic sheeting tents in the evacuation centers in the plaza—along the cemented streets and inside the classrooms of schools in the Poblacion.

Since Aug. 20, there are already eight children who died and seven were wounded of either bomb shrapnel or bullets, while caught in the crossfire or during military operations. To date, seven children have died in evacuation centers inflected with viral diseases and on Oct. 18, two babies died of measles.

Data showed that currently, there are 12,819 children in Datu Piang alone who are vulnerable to harm and susceptible to diseases while living in the evacuation centers. Of this number, 1,214 are toddlers; 1,619 are from 3 to 5 years old; 3,374 are school age children (from 6 to 11 years old); and 4,858 are from 12 to 18 years old.

What does '59 days' in the evacuation center mean to these children?

Based on a research conducted by Save the Children, a group working in the Philippines to create real and lasting change for children in need and an implementing partner of the United States Agency for International Development for its Education Quality and Access for Learning and Livelihood Skills (EQuALLS2) project, it means children can't go to school.

Most vulnerable

"In crisis, children are more vulnerable. Going to school is what children do, in the same manner that adults go to work. Schools are not just places to learn ... When a child can't go to school they lose one of the main sources of stability in their life. In the midst of so much loss and disruption, missing out schooling will intensify the impact of a crisis on children," the research said.

During a group discussion conducted among children in Datu Piang, 13-year old Aira's first question was: "When will our classes resume?"

Aira was among the many children, who were trapped in Barangay Ambadao in Datu Piang during the immense bombardment and gun battle between soldiers and MILF rebels on Aug. 21, 2008.

On a sheet of bond paper, she drew burning houses, parents holding their children and running away while images of men holding guns are firing at each other. There are "simba tanks" near the houses and fighter planes dropping bombs hover above.

Child's drawing

Rashdi, 13, drew a child hiding close to the trunk of a tree while a bomb dropped by a fighter plane exploded right beside it. He actually drew himself.

While the fighter plane was hovering, he ran away from his father to get the cow he has been growing for almost three years.

But, it was too late. The bomb exploded and massive bombardment ensued before he can even get near his cow.

In the evacuation center, he started asking for help to get his cow back. He intends to sell the cow and use the amount for his operation. He is suffering from "closed anus."

Hamid, a grade six pupil, drew a banca loaded with people while air strikes and mortar shelling was on going.

He was on that banca when a mortar bomb exploded in the river bank near them.

Bai, younger sister of Hamid, drew an image of a body lying on the ground. She saw a dead body near a military truck.

Their father, Akmad, a principal and a grade six teacher of Duaminanga Elementary School, was also on that boat that Hamid described.

Longing for school

Hamid said he hopes that the war will stop immediately for them to go back to their village and for classes to resume. Even in the evacuation center, he is hoping to conduct classes.

"Nakakaawa ang mga bata, wala naman silang kasalanan para pahirapan ng ganito," he said while looking at the crowd of people at the evacuation center.

During the discussions with the children, every time the mortar fires that creates a thud on the ground, they burst into sudden laughter.

Save the Children states that, "This is a major cause of stress for children. Education and other key services can help them cope and recover."

In times of emergency, "finding extra resource for education may be difficult as communities and other institutions focus on survival. But this is exactly the time when children are most vulnerable. Their world is changed, living an uncertain present and unknown future. In this context, quality education can both save and sustain lives, by providing children with physical protection, psychological support, and survival skills and knowledge."

Right to education

Children's right to education, like any other human right, should be upheld in all situations—even in times of emergencies.

So in Datu Piang, the district supervisors and school heads of the two school districts, along with local government officials, underwent Education in Emergency orientation and immediately crafted plans and actions to resume the classes of children.

They wrote a request to humanitarian organizations to provide them with tents that they can convert into makeshift classrooms or structures, where families living inside their classrooms can transfer.

They also crafted an appeal to warring groups to immediately stop fighting.

They were alarmed by the thought that if children had been in their classes (especially referring to the children who rode on a banca and got hit by a bomb on Sept. 8 in Barangay Butilen, Datu Piang), their lives would have been spared.

A working committee for Education in Emergency was formed for educators and local officials to pursue their plans and look into the education needs of children while they are in the evacuation centers.

From Oct. 17 to 18, they underwent Peace Space session and crafted "Peace Space Session Plans" that employ active learning and aims to enhance psychosocial support to children.

The team from the local government, on the other hand, conceptualized a municipal wide Peace Space Program that ensures access to education and as a psychosocial support for all children in Datu Piang. Should this be pursued and supported, this will be the first in Mindanao.

Powers and superheroes

"What can we do for children in this kind of situation?" I asked Uke and Eyo, my own children, 5 and 6 years old, respectively, the same question.

They hope that child superheroes are in Datu Piang.

They thought of a child superhero, who runs fast, and saves the lives of children in the midst of war.

They also wanted another child superhero, who turns invisible and emits a shield that protects children from harm. Another superhero would do magic and gives notebooks and toys to children in the evacuation centers. For Kris, a grade four pupil in Datu Piang, she simply drew a hand with flowers growing and birds flying beside it.

She said that that hand possesses a power. It is a hand that stops the war.

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The books which were donated by the Brother's Brother Foundation are intended for the schools in Region 9, 12, and the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM).

"EQuALLS2 has been finding ways to make the donated books from the Brother's Brother Foundation more relevant to the needs of schools in Regions 9, 12, and in ARMM," the organization said in a news statement.

The donated books serve as complementary educational materials for teachers and students.

One approach EQuALLS2 takes is identifying books that can be integrated into teacher trainings, it said.

EQuALLS2 believes that "by integrating the books into a training session, teachers are able to see and explore various ways they can use the books to complement their teaching."

Another approach, it revealed, which the teachers themselves suggested, is to make sure that a school/teacher/classroom gets multiple copies of a book.

According to teachers, EQuALLS2 further disclosed, that one advantage of having multiple copies of a particular book is that students can have their own copy even at the ratio of 2 students is to 1 book.

Based on this insightful feedback, EQuALLS2 organized its warehouses to group same title books together and bundle them in groups of 20-30 copies per title, Miriam Pahm, Director for Technical Programs, EQuALLS2 Project, said.

The book fair is expected to provide "teachers the opportunity to pick books" that may help strengthen their skills in delivering the best education to their students.

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The teachers' attendance will also enable them to avail their English Science Math (ESM) mentors training sessions.

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EQuALL2 also "made clear to teachers that the books are not for their personal use but must be shared with other teachers in their schools."

For the transport of the books that teachers selected, Petron under the Education Livelihood Skills Alliance (ELSA) has pledged to shoulder the cost of the transport of books to the different school beneficiaries.

Dr. Luz Almeda, regional director, Department of Education (DepED) Region 12 is elated for the book donation saying that it is timely for school children particularly in depressed areas and affected by armed skirmishes whose formal education has been temporarily halted. (PIA SarGen) [\[top\]](#)

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Tagalog News: Book Fair isinagawa ng EQuals2

Koronadal City (29 October) -- Isang Book Fair ang isinagawa ng grupong mula sa Education Quality and Access for Learning and livelihood Skills (EQuals2) Project sa Library ng Notre Dame of Marbel University (NDMU).

Layunin nito na matulungan ang mga guro na mapabuti ang kanilang pagtuturo at sa mag-aaral na mapunan ang kanilang pangangailangan sa pag-aaral isa na dito ang pagkakaloob ng mga libro lalo na yaong nasa depressed schools sa mga piling rehiyon sa Mindanao.

Ang nasabing mga libro ay mula sa Brother's Brother Foundation kung saan pangunahing mapagkakalooban nito ang mga paaralan ng Region IX, XII at Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM).

Para naman sa pag-transport ng nasabing mga libro, ipinangako ng Petron na sasagutin nito ang lahat ng gastos sa pamamamahagi ng mga libro sa iba't-ibang paaralan sa ilalim ng Education Livelihood Skills Alliance (ELSA). (Abbenal/PIA 12) [\[top\]](#)

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Quality education for pupils and livelihood training for OSYs pushed

ICC Cotabato City (30 October) -- The United States Agency for Development (USAID) through its project, Education Quality and Access for Learning and Livelihood Skills (EQuALLS) offers a core set of interventions aimed at increasing access to quality education for elementary school schoolchildren, and relevant learning and livelihood skills training for out-of-school youth in three (3) Mindanao regions.

EQuALLS2 project's implementation period is from August, 2006 to July, 2011 under the auspices of the Educational Development Center (EDC), a US based non-profit organization, in partnership with DepEd and DepEd ARMM.

By July 2011, EQuALLS2 project shall have accomplished its targets to include the construction of 600 classrooms, 400 community learning centers and assistance to 20 madaris.

The project is also expected to have extended better learning opportunities to 25% of school-age population enrolled in elementary schools in ARMM, and 10% each in regions 9 and 12.

It is targeting 24,000 teachers/ educators to have been trained in English, Science and Math, with 9,000 trained in the English proficiency program. Another target is for 70% of all administrators and officials from assisted schools shall be trained in school finance, management and governance.

The alternative learning programs and livelihood skills programs shall have generated participation of 100,000 out of school children and youth (SCY) while the livelihood school programs shall have yielded at least 400 OSCY participation.

EQuALLS2 has been reorganizing and revitalizing local educational organizational structures such as the school boards and for this it has set a target of 700 reactivated organizations.

As a complementary activity, EQuALLS2 is instrumental in the distribution of English Science Math books donated by the Brother's Brother Foundation in Regions 9 and 12 and ARMM. Lately 56,000 books were given to 84 elementary schools in Region 12 during a mentors training session at Notre Dame Marbel University. (PIA 12) [\[top\]](#)

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Joseph Durano
Secretary, DOT

Manila, Tuesday, 11 November 2008

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Tagalog News: EQuALLS namahagi ng 56,000 aklat sa 84 paaralang elemntarya sa Rehiyon 12

Koronadal City (30 October) -- Walumpu't-apat na paaralang elementarya sa Rehiyon 12 ang mapalad na nabiyayaan ng 56,000 na mga aklat sa English, Math at Science mula sa Education Quality and Access for Learning and Livelihood Skills 2 (EQuALLS2) upang mapabilis ang pagtuto ng mga mag-aaral sa elementarya.

Sa isang book fair na ginanap noong Oktubre 27-28 sa University Library ng Notre Dame of Marbel University, Koronadal City, tatlong daang guro mula sa Cotabato City, North Cotabato, Sarangani, South Cotabato at Sultan Kudarat na dumadalo ng English Science Math mentors training sessions sa unibersidad ang ipinaliwanagan na ang mga aklat ay hindi para sa personal na gamit kundi dapat rin nila itong ibahagi sa ibang mga guro sa kanilang paaralan.

Bukod pa sa Rehiyon 12, mabibiyayaan din ng mga aklat mula sa EQuALLS2 na inihandog ng Brother's Brother Foundation ay ang Rehiyon 9 at Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.

Sa nasabing book fair, inihayag ni Tom Crehan, opisyal ng Office of Education, USAID Philippines na layunin umano nilang magbigay ng mga nararapat na aklat sa mga tamang paaralan. Aniya, sa pamamagitan ng edukasyon ay magkakaroon ng pag-unlad sa Mindanao at dahil dito ay magkakaroon ng kapayapaan.

Nagpasalamat din si Crehan sa pagpapangalaga sa mga susunod na henerasyon at gayun din sa mga taong tumulong upang ang proyektong ito ay maisakatuparan. (apple/PIA 12) [\[top\]](#)

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Casualties of war: A personal look at how out-of-school youth in war-torn areas embrace life's challenges

by Raiym Raiym

Datu Saudi Ampatuan, Maguindanao (3 October) -- It is not unusual to meet six to seven orphans in a gathering of 30 youth in this town that has been tormented by sporadic armed clashes and family feuds. During a recent skills training for out of school youth sponsored by the USAID's Education Quality and Access for Learning and Livelihood Skills (EQUALLS2) Project, this similar story about the youth was heard and unfolded better opportunities for them.

A stronghold of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, the town has witnessed numerous clashes between Muslim liberation fronts and the government forces. Thousands of lives have perished. This long fierce armed conflict has damaged the so-called self worth of community folks especially unskilled women who were left behind and unable to fend for their children.

These orphans are now grown up, and with a family provider missing, they make up a significant percentage of the out-of-school children and youth (OSCY) in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), which holds the record for having the largest number of OSCY in the country.

According to the Annual Poverty Indicator Survey of the National Statistics Office in 2002 the count was more than one million or 23 percent out of the country's total 4.84 million OSCY among the population aged 6 to 24 years.

A test too early



ASPART OF HOPE FOR YOUNG DREAMERS. Naima proudly displays the chicken sausage she and her fellow trainees made during the 5-day training workshop for out of school youth in Datu Saudi Ampatuan, Maguindanao province. She and 29 other young girls and boys also learned to make other processed food such as pickled fruits and vegetables, pineapple jam, banana chips, and beef tocino. (EQUALLS2)

Naima was in grade three when her father died. She had to stop attending school to help her mother care for her six siblings. For months, her mother tried to sustain the family by working as a laundrywoman in the village. But Naima, being the eldest in a brood of seven, was eventually compelled to work as a housemaid in Cotabato City as assist with the family income. Now 15 years old, she wants to go back to school to complete her elementary education but worries that it might prevent her being able to provide for the family.

Franzen, like his cousin Taya, is another orphan. Franzen did not carry the brunt of providing for the family. The seventh among ten children, three of his elder brothers and sisters have gone to work as domestic helpers in Saudi Arabia. But due to lack of guidance and unstable financial support, Franzen and Taya, now both in their 20s did not finish high school.

For lack of skills, the boys have taken various odd jobs to support themselves. They both know they will have to find a stable job once they start families of their own. Naima on the other hand, yearns to do more than work as a housemaid for life. The training which was a week of short courses on baking and food processing stirred those hopes to life.

"These boys and girls come here without any expectation. Some of them have given up on life. What makes them come back for another

session is this new feeling that they can do something to better their lot," says food processing trainer Raihan Diocolano, an on-call specialist of the Technical Skills Development Authority (TESDA) in ARMM.



Taya (left) and Franzen (seated far right) with their fellow trainees and out of school youth during graduation from the skills training on baking. (EQuALLS2)

Tested by fate and circumstances at an early age, Naima, Franzen, and Taya share a common outlook towards education. Because a college degree seems too elusive, they want to arm themselves with technical skills in hopes of landing a job that will promise a better life.

The USAID-EQuALLS2 Project provides a 10-month alternative learning system for OSCY in selected towns of the ARMM and Regions 9 and 12 combined with livelihood skills training and industry

immersions to cater to the real needs of the youth, such as Naima, who cannot afford to become full-time students because they have to support themselves and their families.

With TESDA as an EQuALLS2 partner its program technicians and specialist are able to train and empower youth with one or two technical skills that they choose themselves. There are a variety of trainings to choose from such as carpentry, masonry, electrical house wiring, cellphone repair, t-shirt printing, automotive repair, fashion jewelry making, and cosmetology.

"It is important that the choice is based on the socio-economic conditions of their town," stated Junie Dumawal of Save the Children, the implementing organization for the EQuALLS2 Project in Datu Saudi Ampatuan. With a population of only 27,000, Save the Children makes it a point to involve the whole community on decision-making process such as Department of Education officials, local government unit representatives, barangay leaders, and parents.

Emancipating and Empowering Muslim girls

Datu Saudi Ampatuan was carved out of the old town of Datu Piang, historically considered the center of Islamic civilization in Maguindanao. Women in this town are required to wear the 'tandong' or head scarf better known as the 'hijab' in Islamic terms when they are in public. Contrary to what others think, the "tandong" symbolizes modesty not exclusion from community events, education, and economic activities.

In a simple graduation ceremony, who would miss the site of three girls in a crowd of more than 40 boys? Not minding their "hijabs" dangling on their shoulders they manage to demonstrate their carpentry skills with ease.

Noraida, the youngest at 15, says her motivation for wanting to learn carpentry skills was because she wants to repair broken furniture or build small ones for their home. Her friends, Norhana and Nasria, both 16 years old already had basic carpentry skills because both of their fathers are local carpenters.

All three dropped out of school due to financial constraints. Noraida is now working in a furniture shop while Norhana and Nasria continue to assist their fathers in their own carpentry shops. With newly honed carpentry skills they can now do "plaining", a process by which carpenters get rid of uneven surfaces by running a machine called "plainer" on the lumber. They also apply varnish on the finished products to achieve a shiny surface.



EASY DOES IT. Noraida shows off her skill with the "plainer", a carpenter's tool used to polish and chip away uneven surfaces on lumber for a local furniture shop in Datu Saudi Ampatuan. (EQuALLS2)

Noraida will stand to earn P250 a day, while her two friends working for the family will help save on labor cost thus increasing the margin for profit. The three girls however still would like to go back to school and earn their college degrees.

"I don't want to burden my family for my education so I want to get skilled and support myself through college," says Noraida, who was a second year high school student when she dropped out.

While the main prospects for employment have always been the Middle East, Noraida says it's only a stepping stone. "Once I've saved enough, I will come back here and expand my father's furniture shop or maybe put up my own business," she adds.

USAID's EQuALLS2 Project aims to improve basic education competencies for 100,000 out of school children and youth by enhancing the capacity of Instructional Managers to deliver alternative learning system programs and offering livelihood skills and workforce development through partnerships with private sector/industries in ARMM, and regions 9 and 12. For the next three years, EQuALLS will construct or renovate 400 Community Learning Centers that will serve as classrooms and training centers for the OSCY across the three regions. (EQuALLS2/PIA) [\[top\]](#)

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Jesli Lapus
Secretary, DepEd

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Cebuano News: De-kalidad nga edukasyon sa mga bata ug livelihood training alang sa mga OSY gipanghingusan

ICC Cotabato City (October 31) -- Ang United States Agency for International Development (USAID) pinaagi sa proyekto niini nga Education Quality and Access for Learning and Livelihood Skills (EQuALLS) nagtanyag og mga lakang ug pamaagi aron mas ma-angkon ang quality education alang sa mga elementary school schoolchildren, ingon man livelihood skills training alang sa mga out-of-school youths (OSY) sa tulo ka rehiyon sa Mindanao.

Ang pagpatuman sa EQuALLS2 maglangkob sugod sa Agosto, 2006, hangtud Hulyo, 2011, ubos sa pagdumala sa Educational Development Center (EDC), usa ka non-profit organization nga naka-base sa Estados Unidos, uban usab sa DepEd ug DepEd ARMM.

Inig ka Hulyo, 2011, ang EQuALLS2 project makahimo na sa iyang target nga naglakip sa pag-gama og 600 ka mga lawak-tunghaan, 400 ka mga community learning centers ug assistance sa 20 ka madaris.

Tuyo sab sa maong proyekto ang paghatag og maayong learning opportunities sa 25% sa school-age population nga na-enroll sa mga elementary schools sa ARMM, ug 10% sa rehiyon 9 ug 12.

Nag-target sab kini og 24,000 ka mga magtutudlo nga ma-train sa English, Science ug Math, ingon man 9,000 nga ma-train sa English proficiency program.

Lain pang target mao nga 70% sa mga administrators ug officials ang ma-train sa school finance, management, ug governance.

Ang alternative learning programs ug livelihood skills programs maka-paapil na unya og mga 100,000 ka mga out of school children and youth (SCY) samtang ang livelihood school programs moresulta na og 400 OSCY ang makapahimulos.

Pinaagi sa EQuALLS2 na-reorganize ang mga local educational organizational structures sama sa school boards, ug target niini ang pag-reactivate sa 700 organizations.

Nag-apod-apod usab ang maong proyekto og mga English, Science, ug Math nga mga libro nga gi-donate sa Brother's Brother Foundation sa Rehiyon 9, 12, ug ARMM. (PIA-Southern Leyte) [\[top\]](#)

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Casualties of war: A personal look at how out-of-school youth in war-torn areas embrace life's challenges

Source: [Government of the Philippines](#)

Date: 03 Oct 2008

by *Raiym Raiym*

Datu Saudi Ampatuan, Maguindanao (3 October) -- It is not unusual to meet six to seven orphans in a gathering of 30 youth in this town that has been tormented by sporadic armed clashes and family feuds. During a recent skills training for out of school youth sponsored by the USAID's Education Quality and Access for Learning and Livelihood Skills (EQuALLS2) Project, this similar story about the youth was heard and unfolded better opportunities for them.

A stronghold of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, the town has witnessed numerous clashes between Muslim liberation fronts and the government forces. Thousands of lives have perished. This long fierce armed conflict has damaged the so-called self worth of community folks especially unskilled women who were left behind and unable to fend for their children.

These orphans are now grown up, and with a family provider missing, they make up a significant percentage of the out-of-school children and youth (OSCY) in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), which holds the record for having the largest number of OSCY in the country.

According to the Annual Poverty Indicator Survey of the National Statistics Office in 2002 the count was more than one million or 23 percent out of the country's total 4.84 million OSCY among the population aged 6 to 24 years.

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Naima was in grade three when her father died. She had to stop attending school to help her mother care for her six siblings. For months, her mother tried to sustain the family by working as a laundrywoman in the village. But Naima, being the eldest in a brood of seven, was eventually compelled to work as a housemaid in Cotabato City as assist with the family income. Now 15 years old, she wants to go back to school to complete her elementary education but worries that it might prevent her being able to provide for the family.

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For lack of skills, the boys have taken various odd jobs to support themselves. They both know they will have to find a stable job once they start families of their own. Naima on the other hand, yearns to do more than work as a housemaid for life. The training which was a week of short courses on baking and food processing stirred those hopes to life.



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These boys and girls come here without any expectation. Some of them have given up on life. What makes them come back for another session is this new feeling that they can do something to better their lot," says food processing trainer Raihan Diocolano, an on-call specialist of the Technical Skills Development Authority (TESDA) in ARMM.

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USAID conducts training for math, science teachers

By **TONY PE. RIMANDO**

CEBU CITY - The United States Agency for International Development (USAID), through project Education Quality and Access for Learning and Livelihood Skills (EQUALS 2), conducted at the Richmond Place Hotel here two separate live-in "Trainings of Trainers" for Mindanao-based science and mathematics educators.

EQUALS2 Formal Education Specialist Lorena Aquino said the training was held in cooperation with the University of the Philippines Institute for Science and Mathematics Education Development (UPISMED).

Participants in the two activities, Aquino said, were Department of Education (DepEd) FIELD science and mathematics supervisors, master teachers and selected professors of teacher-education institutions in Central Mindanao (Region 12), Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), and Zamboanga Peninsula (Region 9).

Aquino said the training involved, among others, workshops which exposed the educators to various activities using hands-on, minds-on and hearts-on exercises in line with the principle of "learning by doing."

After the two training courses, Aquino said, the participants were tasked to echo what they had learned and experienced in the Cebu episodes to selected mathematics and science teachers in identified public elementary schools in the three Muslim-Christian regions.

The trained grade school mentors were also later required to re-echo the lessons they would learn from their Cebu-trained trainers to their fellow teachers during scheduled school-based Learning Action CELLS (LAC) sessions or through peer teaching.

Aquino said the two Cebu training courses were designed to upgrade the quality of teaching elementary science and mathematics in the three Mindanao regions.



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USAID donates 281,000 books to schools

By **QUEENIE CASIMIRO**, ABS-CBN News Zamboanga | 11/24/2008 10:26 PM

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School children and school officials from Zamboanga City, Basilan, Sulu and Tawi-Tawi excitedly shopped for books during a book fair initiated by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

Some 281,000 assorted books were up for picks at the Tetuan Central Elementary School.

US Ambassador Kristie Kenney called on the students to take care of the books and to learn from them.

Walter Albos, Department of Education Region 9 officer in charge, welcomed the books donated by USAID. He said it will greatly help the pupils and their teachers.

"The Philippine government has less appropriations for books next year. While this, this is for free." Albos said.

Albos said he attended the budget hearing at the Lower House and said "our budget was even sliced. Only skin and bones are left, no more for books. Not even for engineering works such as school buildings."

The activity is the second book fair conducted by USAID in Mindanao.

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USAID donates 281,000 books to schools

By *abraham_baladad*
Created 11/24/2008 - 22:26

USAID donates 281,000 books to schools ^[1]

By **QUEENIE CASIMIRO, ABS-CBN News Zamboanga** | 11/24/2008 10:26 PM

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School children and school officials from Zamboanga City, Basilan, Sulu and Tawi-Tawi excitedly shopped for books during a book fair initiated by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

Some 281,000 assorted books were up for picks at the Tetuan Central Elementary School.

US Ambassador Kristie Kenney called on the students to take care of the books and to learn from them.

Walter Albos, Department of Education Region 9 officer in charge, welcomed the books donated by USAID. He said it will greatly help the pupils and their teachers.

"The Philippine government has less appropriations for books next year. While this, this is for free." Albos said.

Albos said he attended the budget hearing at the Lower House and said "our budget was even sliced. Only skin and bones are left, no more for books. Not even for engineering works such as school buildings."

The activity is the second book fair conducted by USAID in Mindanao.

as of 11/24/2008 10:26 PM



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USAID, Petron donate 2 classrooms for Tawi-Tawi

BONGAO, Tawi-Tawi – United States (U.S.) deputy envoy to the Philippines Paul Jones and Petron Foundation President Jose Jesus Laurel formally inaugurated recently the newly completed two-classroom building at Panglima Arasia Elementary School at Barangay Sanga-Sanga here. The two officials also donated over 200 volumes of books and other learning and reading materials for the elementary school pupils of the school during the same occasion. The construction of the school building is a project of the Education Quality and Access for Learning and Livelihood Skills (EQuALLS2) and funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and Petron Foundation. Top national and local government officials, including officials from the US government, witnessed the inauguration. Among them were Tawi-Tawi Provincial Gov. Sadikul Sahali and Bongao (Tawi-Tawi) Mayor Albert Que. USAID Mission Director Jon Lindborg said the USAID-Petron partnership will construct 120 more classrooms and rehabilitate 480 classrooms in the coming three years. (Nonoy Lacson)

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MALAPATAN, Sarangani (November 3, 2008) – Education Quality and Access for Learning and Livelihood Skills (EQuALLS2) Project representative Dr. Zenaida Domingo turns over EQuALLS2's story books to Schools Division Superintendent Deborah Adrales, with District Supervisor Perla Caminade, at the launching program of National Books Store Foundation's Buklat Aklat Mobile Library Project in Lun PAdidu Elementary School Monday, November 3. (Photo by Cocoy Sexcion/SARANGANI INFORMATION OFFICE)

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