

**CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE  
FOR TEACHER TRAINING**

**IN CENTRAL AMERICAN AND THE  
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC**

**CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORKS**

**Basic Education and Policy Support (BEPS) Activity  
Contract No. HNE-I-00-00-00038-00**

# **CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE FOR TEACHER TRAINING IN CENTRAL AMERICA AND THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC**

## **CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

### **Goal of the program**

The goal of CETT in Central America is to promote an innovative form of leadership to strengthen the teaching of reading, thereby increasing primary school students' reading ability, in Central America and the Dominican Republic.

### **Purpose:**

To improve competency in reading comprehension for children in grades 1-3 by introducing reading packets aimed at improving impact in the classroom. These packets will be created for teachers and administrators in schools in remote, rural communities, outlying urban areas, and communities where a native language other than Spanish exists.

### **CETT Beneficiaries in Central America**

During the first phase, the program will be implemented in 15 schools in 3 countries as part of the pilot project. After assuring progress, the second year will gradually begin to incorporate the participation of the rest of the countries in the region.

The direct beneficiaries will be children in grades 1-3 of selected schools through the training of:

- in-service teachers with varying academic qualifications;
- school directors; and
- district directors and technical staff, or the like.

The program will influence schools:

- in rural and outlying urban areas whose populations' are socioeconomically disadvantaged or whose native language is not Spanish;
- that are grouped by school district or in a similar fashion that demonstrate low, medium or high output levels of education;
- where there is only one faculty member or multiple faculty members;

- that have demonstrated interest and commitment to be part of the program;
- that do not receive similar support from other donors; and
- that possess educational leadership inclined towards innovation and a commitment to excellence, or that are looking to possess these qualities.

## **Objectives**

Program objectives:

1. To improve the reading levels for 240,000 students.
2. To train 6,000 teachers in:
  - the use of diagnostic instruments and performance evaluation
  - innovative methods and techniques for teaching reading
  - student-centered classroom methods
  - multigrade techniques
3. To design and produce 250,000 sets of materials for students and teachers.
4. To execute a training program for 400 administrators, placing emphasis on strengthening school support for the improvement of reading.
5. To form a network among public and private institutions, NGOs, and civil society in support of the schools.
6. To develop diagnostic and measuring instruments applicable at the classroom level.
7. To utilize appropriate technological resources to support the process learning to read in the classroom.
8. To implement a program directed at all potential direct and indirect stakeholders having influence over the program, with particular consideration towards social conscientization and mobilization, and the promotion and support of reading in the beneficiary communities.

Objectives for the first phase of the program (first year):

1. Define and agree on a conceptual base and a global action for program execution.
2. Deliver instructional materials for 45 teachers and 2000 students.
3. Train 21 teacher trainers (in 7 countries), 45 teachers and 18 school principals and administrators.
4. Ensure quality training during the pilot project in 15 schools in 3 countries in the region.
5. Establish a database that contains information on successful reading practices, instructional materials, and education and training programs for teachers, such as exercises for teacher training using technology.

### **Strategies to guaranty program success**

The following strategies are grouped into three categories according to their actions and impact on the success of the program:

#### **Technical:**

1. Focus training at the classroom level.  
The priority of the program is to make changes in teaching practices. The most effective way of doing so is by working directly with the teachers in the classrooms.
2. Initially work with in-service teachers, and later transfer those practices toward the pre-service education of teachers.  
Working with in-service teachers will ensure immediate impact on classrooms, while subsequent encouragement of practices for pre-service education will link overall teacher education and practices in the classroom.
3. Develop a unified model for the region with enough flexibility to take into account the cultural diversity of the participating countries.

The program will develop a model with the following basic characteristics: low cost, adequate, and specifically centered on the improvement of education quality in reading. This model will facilitate community strengthening among the individual members, such as creating respect for cultural diversity among participants.

4. Develop and establish a training model for the pilot project, to be expanded only after having assured its effectiveness.  
This strategy is aimed at reducing the risk of expanding a program where the adequacy in achieving the intended goal has not been assured. This reduction is more likely to ensure successful replication of the model.
5. Incorporate practical and technical innovative school practices that have shown to be successful.  
Prior training and experiences that have proven successful, but for whatever reason were not previously continued nor propagated, will be used and adapted, with the additional advantage of reducing real costs.
6. Develop monitoring and evaluation systems.  
The purpose would be to generate pertinent information to enable better decision-making.
7. Utilize technological resources to train teachers.  
This strategy will augment access for participants and have a greater impact on improving program efficiency by reducing costs and selecting appropriate technology for the diverse characteristics and profiles of the beneficiary groups.
8. Establish mechanisms to facilitate teacher instruction.  
It is necessary to take into consideration actions directed toward the social value of teachers, their sense of professional advancement, and a shared working atmosphere in the community, such as the integration of the environment with the school.

## **Organizational:**

9. Develop a base of solidarity and trust among the member institutions of the consortium to facilitate the efficient development of the program.  
Define operational limits, corresponding to each institution within the framework of the consortium (such as defining the processes that will be utilized for program implementation), that will encourage the development of a corporate identity for all stakeholders. The implementation of this strategy also requires a reliable flow of communication among the parties.
10. Develop an organic working structure for the program that helps take advantage of the capacities and resources of the institutions.
11. Develop participatory work mechanisms to generate opportunities for the program and assure its sustainability.
12. The introduction of a systemic focus on program actions.  
Given its complexity, the program should create conditions that foment synergy.

## **Political:**

12. Form strategic alliances between the members of the consortium and institutions in the countries.  
This strategy will legitimize the processes so that the institutions can gain ownership of the program.
13. Establish and strengthen strategic alliances of public-private cooperation in the education sector.  
These alliances will strengthen a trustworthy environment between the sectors, and at the same time mobilize private resources to support education.
14. Support current education reform efforts led by the MOEs of the countries.  
It is understood that this program is a contribution toward a solution to the bigger problem of education quality.

15. Promote a vision of regional integration by taking advantage of and realizing the potential of economic, political and social opportunities. The purpose is to strengthen the capacity by joining the countries and recognizing the advantages of block negotiating.
16. Develop the social and economic value of reading through the betterment of social mobility possibilities for program beneficiaries.
17. Establish participation mechanisms for teacher organizations, provided that country conditions permit. It will be the institutions that define the participation feasibility of the creation of these unions.

## **Theoretical Base**

The theoretic and methodological basis of our proposal for grades 1-3 of basic education take as departing point the sociological and cultural elements and the factual knowledge of the process involved in adopting the necessary skills to learn reading. We understand the learning process as part of the personal development within society, closely attached to the cultural context and other educational activities where children, teachers, parents and education administrators interact. Educational activities are interwoven in the context where they take place.

## **Goal of the program**

*To achieve excellence in the reading skills of children in grades 1-3 through interventions addressed to teachers and school administrators located in disadvantaged areas or with lower educational level, with an impact in the classroom in support of the concept of reading as a learning instrument.*

CETT Beneficiaries in Central America and the Dominican Republic  
The direct beneficiaries of the program are teachers in service con different levels of academic background, with the support of school principals, district directors and technical staff or the like.

The program will influence schools:  
in rural and outlying urban areas whose populations' are in socio-economic disadvantage or whose native language is other than Spanish;  
grouped by school district, with low output levels of education;  
where there is only one faculty member or multiple faculty members;  
that do not receive support in reading instruction from other donors;  
and  
where teachers show a positive predisposition to participate.

## **Objectives**

Objectives for the first phase of the program (first year):

To define and adopt a theoretical and methodological framework of

the program.

To define a global action plan for the program implementation.

To define the profile of the basic education teacher with the ideal features to teach reading.

To develop a database with all the best practices in reading, teaching materials, pre-service and in-service teacher training programs, as well as experiences in the use of technology in teacher training.

To develop teaching guides with conceptual and methodological materials for teachers.

Test the intervention with a pilot project in 20 schools of four countries of the region. The pilot will include research of the process and results.

Record the experiences and training process to include the appropriate feedback that will improve the taking decision process.

Develop diagnostic and measurement tools for reading to be applied in the classroom.

Determine our actual knowledge on:

Teachers capabilities to teach reading

Main difficulties students encounter when learning reading

Develop a social awareness and mobilization program to promote and support reading at national level and in the communities benefiting from the program, including all potential direct and indirect stakeholders that could eventually participate in the program.

### **Strategies to guaranty program success**

The following strategies are grouped into three categories according to their actions and impact on the success of the program:

#### **Technical:**

Focus training at the classroom level.

The priority of the program is to make changes in teaching practices.

The most effective way of doing so is by working directly with the teachers in the classrooms.

1. Initially work with in-service teachers, and later transfer those practices toward the pre-service teacher training programs. Working with in-service teachers will ensure immediate impact on classrooms, while subsequent encouragement of practices for pre-

service education will link overall teacher education and practices in the classroom.

2. Develop a regional unified model flexible enough to include the cultural diversity of the participating countries.

The program will develop a model with the following basic characteristics: low cost, adequate, and specifically centered on the improvement of education quality in reading. This model will facilitate community strengthening among the individual members and will encourage respect for cultural diversity among participants.

3. Develop and establish a training model for the pilot project, to be expanded only after having assured its effectiveness.

This strategy is aimed at reducing the risk of expanding a program where the adequacy in achieving the intended goal has not been tested. Testing will enable a successful replication of the model.

4. Incorporate practical and technical innovative school practices that have proven successful.

Prior training and experiences that have proven successful, but for whatever reason were not previously continued nor propagated, will be used and adapted, with the additional advantage of reducing actual costs.

5. Develop monitoring and evaluation systems.

The purpose would be to generate pertinent information to enable better decision-making.

6. Utilize technological resources to train teachers.

This strategy will increase access for participants and have a greater impact on improving program efficiency by reducing costs and selecting appropriate technology for the diverse characteristics and profiles of the beneficiary groups.

7. Establish mechanisms to facilitate teaching instruction.

It is necessary to take into consideration actions directed toward improving the social value of teachers, their sense of professional advancement, and a shared working atmosphere in the community, such as the integration of the environment with the school.

8. Work in collaboration with US and other country's institutions specialized in teaching reading.

### **Organizational:**

13. Develop a base of solidarity and trust among the member institutions of the consortium to facilitate the efficient development of the program.  
Define operational limits, corresponding to each institution within the framework of the consortium (such as defining the processes that will be utilized for program implementation) that will encourage the development of a corporate identity for all stakeholders. The implementation of this strategy also requires a reliable flow of communication among the parties.
14. Develop an organic working structure of the program that helps take advantage of the capacities and resources of the institutions.
15. Develop participatory working mechanisms to generate opportunities for the program and assure its sustainability.
16. The introduction of a systemic focus on program actions.  
Given its complexity, the program should create conditions that foment synergy.

### **Policies:**

1. Form strategic alliances between the members of the consortium and institutions in the countries.  
This strategy will legitimize the processes so that the institutions can gain ownership of the program.
2. Establish and strengthen strategic alliances of public-private cooperation in the education sector.  
These alliances will strengthen a trustworthy environment between the sectors, and at the same time mobilize private resources to support education.

3. Support current education reform efforts led by the MOEs of the countries.

It is understood that this program is a contribution toward a solution to the bigger problem of education quality.

4. Promote a vision of regional integration by taking advantage of and realizing the potential of economic, political and social opportunities.

The purpose is to strengthen the capacity by joining the countries and recognizing the advantages of block negotiating.

5. Develop the social and economic value of reading through the betterment of social mobility possibilities for program beneficiaries.