



Mis en oeuvre par:



En partenariat avec:



PAQUED QUARTERLY REPORT October 1 - December 31, 2010



USAID and MEPSP Officials visit PAQUED's warehouse
where school kits are assembled before being dispatched to schools

**Submitted to USAID/DRC
January 31, 2011**

TABLE OF CONTENT

INTRODUCTION.....	2
1.0. OPERATIONS.....	2
1.1. STAFFING	2
1.2. OFFICE SET UP	3
1.3. PROCUREMENT.....	3
1.4. SCHOOL KITS	3
2.0. PROGRAMMATIC ACTIVITIES.....	3
2.1. SCHOOL SELECTION.....	3
2.2. NATIONAL CONFERENCE	3
2.3. STEERING COMMITTEE MEETINGS.....	4
2.4. ACHIEVEMENTS UNDER OBJECTIVE 1	5
2.4.1 TRAINING MASTER TRAINERS	5
2.4.2 TRAINING CLUSTER FACILITATORS.....	7
2.5. ACHIEVEMENTS UNDER OBJECTIVE 2:.....	8
2.6. ACHIEVEMENTS UNDER OBJECTIVE 3.....	9
3.0. M&E ACTIVITIES.....	11
3.1. BASELINE DATA.....	11
3.1.1 EGRA AND EGMA	11
3.1.2 TEACHERS' CONTENT KNOWLEDGE.....	12
3.1.3 TEACHERS' PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICES	13
3.2. M&E OVERALL STRATEGY	14
.	
4.0. NEW OPPORTUNITIES AND TRENDS.....	14
5.0. SUCCESS STORY.....	15
6.0. PROJECT ACCOMPLISHMENTS VERSUS PLANNED ACTIVITIES.....	15
7.0. CALENDAR FOR NEXT QUARTER.....	15
8.0. CHALLENGES AND CONSTRAINTS.....	15
8.1. DELAYED DELIVERY OF LIFEPLAYER RADIOS	15
8.2. COMMUNITY SMALL GRANTS FOR SIP IMPLEMENTATION	16

LIST OF ACRONYMS

AFD	Agence Française de Développement
CGES	Comité de Gestion Scolaire
COP	Chief of Party
COPA	Comité des Parents
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
EDC	Education Development Center
EGMA	Early Grade Math Assessment
EGRA	Early Grade Reading Assessment
IFCEPS	Institut de Formation des Cadres de l'Enseignement Primaire et Secondaire
IPAF	Inspecteur Principal Adjoint Chargé de la Formation
IPP	Inspecteur Provincial Principal
IRI	Interactive Radio Instruction
MEPSP	Ministère de l'Enseignement Primaire, Secondaire et Professionnelle
OPEQ	Opportunities
PROVED	Province Educationnelle
SIP	School Improvement Plan

INTRODUCTION

On September 15, 2009 Education Development Center received an award from USAID to implement the PIEQ (Package for Improving Education Quality) program. Later USAID allowed EDC to use the French equivalent acronym "PAQUED" (Projet d'Amélioration de la Qualité de l'Éducation) as the official name of the project.

PAQUED will:

- provide teachers with a continuous professional development program centered around the design and implementation of innovative, meaningful learning experiences;
- ensure that that program is delivered at the local level, and that it includes supports to incrementally build teachers' capacity as they experiment with new practices in the classroom;
- provide teachers with incentives to change their practices, and publicly reward them;
- furnish teachers and students with the basic resources and materials necessary to support their learning, including a safe, inviting learning environment; and
- encourage parents and communities to advocate for and take a leadership role in school improvement.

The following is a narrative technical report of PAQUED for the period October 1 – December 31, 2010. The report describes achievements in terms of general operations and programmatic activities.

1.0. OPERATIONS

1.1. STAFFING

On November 3rd 2010, Dr. Mark Hamilton joined the project as the new Education Technical Advisor. Immediately upon arrival, he began preparing a series of important training events scheduled for the first Quarter of year 2. He subsequently coordinated the training events in all three provinces.

CRS hired 18 new animators to cater for the new schools that it will target this second year of the project.

The search for the project M&E Director has been unsuccessful still; we continue to review applications and conduct interviews.

1.2. OFFICE SET UP

As previously reported, we had been looking for new office space in Kinshasa, due to the fact the current space is not big enough to meet our needs. We found and secured a new office within walking distance from our current location. The move to the new office will take place late February – early March, 2011.

1.3. PROCUREMENT

As mentioned in the previous report, due to unreliable internet connection, we sought to acquire a VSAT connection. A local company won the invitation for bid (IFB) that we had issued. The connection was installed in Kinshasa; next it will be done in each of the three provincial sites (Bandundu, Mbandaka, and Kisangani).

1.4. SCHOOL KITS

We began packing school kits (purchased during the last reporting period). Dozens of casual laborer were hired to sort various items and put them in boxes. It turned out to be a major operation, much bigger and more complex than we had ever imagined. Thus, our plan to begin dispatching the kits before the end of the calendar year did not materialize. However, IFB were prepared requesting transporters to submit offers to deliver the kits to various project sites during the second quarter.

2.0. PROGRAMMATIC ACTIVITIES

2.1. SCHOOL SELECTION

During the quarter under review project staff and provincial educational authorities continued to closely examine the schools that had been selected to ensure that they really met key selection criteria, including accessibility, the capacity to form a cluster with other schools and ability to receive radio broadcasts. In that process, a total of 32 that had been previously selected were replaced by others established by the project in cooperation with MEPSp and USAID.

2.2. NATIONAL CONFERENCE

Project staff and key Ministry officials from both the central and provincial levels met in Kinshasa Nov 22 – 24 in a national conference. The objectives were to:

Projet d'Amélioration de la Qualité de l'Éducation (PAQUED)
Quarterly Report October 1 - December 31, 2010

- Review and validate the findings of EGRA and EGMA pilot tests;
- Review and validate the findings the baseline studies;
- Review and finalize the profiles that had been developed earlier; and
- Examine the possibility of using a new instrument to assess teachers' performance.

All expected outcomes related to the above objectives were produced. Overall, the conference successfully achieved all its objectives as evidenced by participants' evaluation of the various sessions. The final products (EGRA/EGMA preliminary findings, Baseline study, Profiles) are attached as annexes.

2.3. STEERING COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The project organized two steering committee meetings: the first was at the national level in Kinshasa, the second was at the provincial level (Bandundu).

At the national level, members included two of the top advisors of the Minister of Education, a representative of the General Secretariat of the MEPSP, and three representatives of the Inspectorate General. The participants appreciated the results that the project had achieved in year 1 and were particularly impressed by the numbers and types of materials that the project has assembled to constitute school kits. They made the following recommendations:

- Avail the list of targeted schools to the Minister
- Inform the Minister of any strategic issues that require his attention
- Make sure that Inspectors are closely involved in project activities on the ground
- Ensure that the project works to reinforce the "cellules pédagogiques de base" within the school clusters concept.
- Expand the list of participants next time to include representatives from the Ministries of Finance and Plan.

At the provincial level, members included the Bandundu Governor himself, and IPP and IPAF from all three educational provinces. As was the case at the national level, provincial members of the steering committee expressed very positive appreciation for project accomplishments, especially with regards to the trainings that had just been conducted and the resource centers that were near completion. Four main issues (that the COP raised) were debated during the meeting. The issues and recommendations are summarized below.

How do we ensure that school kits actually reach the schools (and do not end up in the local markets) and are effectively used?

Recommendation: CGEs and COPA members should be informed and sensitized about the kits before they arrive; inspectors will work with school principals to ensure that the kits are properly used and are made fully available to teachers and their students.

How do we ensure that clusters and the “Unités Pédagogiques de Base” are truly functional?

Recommendation: IPAF’s will request Master Trainers to report any difficulties that the clusters may encounter, and work with EDC to solve them. If needed, higher authorities (IPAFF and PROVED) will be consulted and asked to intervene.

How do we ensure that teachers and students listen to IRI programs regularly?

Recommendation: Master trainers will monitor the use of IRI programs during school visits; project staff will likewise visit schools to monitor the use of IRI school classrooms. Participants agree that the extent to which the teachers use IRI programs should be reflected on teachers’ formal evaluations. (It should be noted that the project will provide further incentives, including awarding certificates of completion to qualifying teachers for their participation in self-directed teacher training modules.)

How do we ensure that communities (through COPA) are truly involved in school affairs?

Recommendation: the project will intensify training and sensitization involving both COPA and CGE members. (As appropriate, the project will link community mobilization, teaching and learning activities within the project.

2.4. ACHIEVEMENTS UNDER OBJECTIVE 1

2.4.1 *Training Master Trainers*

The most important event that boosted project implementation during the period under review was undoubtedly the training of 181 MEPSP staff in all three target provinces including Master Trainers. The training consisted of three parts: Forum d’échange (i.e., teacher-led discussions focused on improving learning), Module 1 (using Interactive Radio Instruction, IRI) and Module 2 (making and teaching with didactic materials).

“Forums d’échange”: This topic was not initially included among PAQUED training modules. However, discussions between project staff and MEPSP technicians clearly demonstrated the need to train participants in that topic. “Forums d’échange” include neighborhood clusters and the “cellules de base”, the main channels on which rests the whole new approach of in-service training that the Ministry is promoting. In fact, the project’s concept of self-directed

learning modules, which emphasizes teacher participation in locally organized professional development activities, is well suited to this approach.

Module 1: Using IRI effectively in the classroom. The module focused on explaining the concept and

Principles of interactive radio instruction, its use to boost learning among students, and its capacity to help teachers improve their practices. Much time was spent on actually manipulating the Lifeplayer wind-up/solar radios that will be used during IRI programs airing.

Module 2: Making and using instructional materials h and Mathematics.



Master trainers learn how to build instructional aides out of locally found

The participants were trained in making and using instructional materials with locally available materials.

The project provided essential tools such as saws and hammers and taught the participants how to make some basic instructional materials using those tools. A full day was devoted to practice: the participants worked in small groups to make a variety of materials for use in the classroom.

Trainers and participants likewise discussed how to use various materials throughout a given lesson.

The results of participant evaluations show that the training was well received in all three provinces. Project training staff reported active participation was active, underscoring the high level of interest of the participants in the content and activities.

A number of provincial-level ministry officials attended the training and expressed their satisfaction with the project's approach. In Orientale Province, for example, the Director of the Minister's Office attended and participated in all activities alongside the other participant.

The tables below show the number of participants involved in the training, per province:

ORIENTALE PROVINCE			
	MASTER TRAINERS	OTHERS	TOTAL
FEMALES	4	1	5
MALES	43	13	56
TOTAL	47	14	61

BANDUNDU PROVINCE			
	MASTER TRAINERS	OTHERS	TOTAL
FEMALES	6	1	7
MALES	41	12	53
TOTAL	47	13	60

EQUATEUR PROVINCE			
	MASTER TRAINERS	OTHERS	TOTAL
FEMALES	5	1	6
MALES	35	24	59
TOTAL	40	25	65

2.4.2 *Training Cluster Facilitators*

A week after complete their own training, Master Trainers began training a total of 186 Cluster Facilitators on the same content. Initial observations by project staff have shown a high level of enthusiasm and the ease that the Master Trainers exhibited while training the facilitators. The roll out of these trainings will continue into the second quarter. The three tables below shows the number of Cluster Facilitators trained during the period under review.

ORIENTALE PROVINCE	
	Cluster Facilitators
FEMALES	16
MALES	103
TOTAL	119

PROVINCE DE BANDUNDU	
	Cluster Facilitators
FEMALES	32
MALES	273
TOTAL	305

PROVINCE DE L'EQUATEUR	
	Cluster Facilitators
FEMALES	10
MALES	55
TOTAL	65

2.5. ACHIEVEMENTS UNDER OBJECTIVE 2:

2.5.1 Scriptwriting



Master trainers learn how to use the RAN10 solar screens that accompany Modules 1 & 2.

During the reporting period, the team of eight scriptwriters produced 20 scripts of the 200 literacy and numeracy support IRI programs for grades 3 and 4. These programs provide 2h30 per week and per grade of targeted, pedagogical support to literacy and numeracy learning while providing a highly effective model for teachers' ongoing development.

The programs are also accompanied by a teacher resource guide that helps prepare teachers to effectively use each program to maximize the impact of IRI programs in the classroom. In addition, the guide provides teachers with ideas for instructional materials, games, and evaluation activities while creating a positive learning environment for both students and teachers. Recordings and field-testing of the grade 3 & 4 programs and development of teachers' guides are expected to begin in mid-January.

2.5.2 EGRA and EGMA

RTI completed the collection of data for EGRA (Early Grades Reading Assessment, in French, Grades 2, 4 and 6) and EGMA (Early Grades Math Assessment, Grades 2, 4 and 6) in the 3 PAQUED provinces of Bandundu, Equateur and Orientale. RTI visited a total of 144 schools to collect these data, 109 of which had participated in the PIEQ program. The remaining 35 establishments were control schools. Data collected from this group of schools is to provide a basis of comparison to measure the progress of project interventions at the end of the project. In Bandundu Province, 36 schools were selected; 36 schools in Equateur; and 37 schools in Orientale, using a clustered sampling approach. First, six subdivisions were randomly selected, then six schools were selected in those subdivisions. In each of the same districts selected, two schools were chosen as control schools.

A data entry system for the DRC was created using the six data collection instruments (French grades 2,4,6 and Math grades 2,4,6) provided. The local RTI Research Specialist and a consultant were first trained in the use of the data entry system, who then trained the data entry clerks. During the process of data entry, a daily log was kept of quality control, for which 10% of the data was checked for errors. The quality control done on a daily basis helped assure that all data entry clerks were performing up to a quality standard, as they were subject to dismissal if more than 5 errors were found for more than a two days in a row. On average, the data entry clerks made 0.38 errors per form. This is less than an error for

every 2 forms entered, and given the hundreds of data points per assessment (item-level data entry was done), this is a very low rate of error.

2.6. ACHIEVEMENTS UNDER OBJECTIVE 3

2.6.1 Training Listening Groups

CRS Senior CMTA drafted training Modules and curricula to train Caritas animators on how to organize and facilitate listening groups in selected school-communities. After the training, the Caritas animators will identify a community volunteer (Listening Group Volunteer- LGV) that they will train.

The LGV will then be equipped to organize weekly listening sessions and lead discussions around key messages. The radio messages and listening groups facilitation have been identified as a key medium to ensure a durable change of behavior within the targeted communities. Training for LGV will be organized in the second quarter of Year 2, subject to the arrival of radios ordered last year.

2.6.2 Training Mothers in Psycho Social Support

Training in psycho social support continued to take place mainly in Lisala and Kenge (Equateur and Bandundu provinces respectively). Due to insufficient number of mothers from communities who were willing and able to receive the training, the project included female teachers in the training. These teachers will join hands with the mothers in the organizations of psycho-social activities at the school level, thereby improving the level of participation of local women.

2.6.3 Conducting schools environment baseline in year 2 targeted schools

CRS and partners conducted a baseline survey of the school environment in all year 2 targeted schools in the three provinces. The baseline questionnaire used in Year 1 was then updated and conducted in each targeted school. The information collected confirms preliminary project findings indicating that COPAs and CGEs exist in most schools, but are not fully functional. Most COPA/CGE members have never received any training; they meet irregularly and do not know their roles and responsibilities in school management and activities.

2.6.4 SIP Implementation

With support from CRS and partners, 300 communities have each developed a School Improvement Plans (SIP). Unfortunately, contrary to initial project plans, no funds were disbursed during the quarter to support the SIP's. The delay is due primarily to concerns over the risks involved in fund distribution, given the generally poor infrastructure in many localities throughout the targeted provinces. The project is in the process of designing an effective disbursement system in an effort to minimize these risks while maximizing the benefits of these funds to participating schools.

2.6.5 Second Generation of Community Radio Programs

Due to the focus of the PAQUED team on training preparation, the writing of 2nd generation community radio programs has not yet begun. The writing is planned to begin in quarter 2 by a team of Ministry scriptwriters, under the direction of PAQUED's IRI specialist.

It should be noted that the recording process for the second generation of the community radio programs may be severely delayed due to a recent fire at the renovated MEPSP studio that destroyed much of the recording equipment. Damages are being evaluated and a decision of how to proceed with the programs will be made accordingly.

2.6.6 Resource Centers Rehabilitation / Construction

During the quarter under review, CRS has initially completed the rehabilitation and renovation of a group of Kisangani resource center buildings– IFCEPS, including the office of the Director, training rooms, latrines, classrooms and kitchen.

CRS also developed the call for tender for additional rehabilitation work requested by the Ministry of Education. EDC accepted to increase the total LoA budget for CRS to complete this additional work, which will include dormitories, classrooms and a fence. However, EDC will factor these additional improvements into an overall budget revision. The rehabilitation work is expected to continue for 6 months, until end of September 2011. The Construction officer contract will be extended accordingly, if necessary.



One of the IFCEPS Buildings that has been rehabilitated

Construction work has been steady. In Bandundu especially, it is anticipated that all the work will be done by end of February. Inauguration is expected to take place around March 15th. We will keep USAID abreast of progress on a regular basis.

3.0. M&E ACTIVITIES

3.1. BASELINE DATA

During the period under review, the project completed the analysis and final write up of the baseline studies conducted last year. However, regarding EGRA and EGMA, the analysis and write up were done on a pilot study.

The following are selected highlights of the findings of each baseline study:

3.1.1 EGRA and EGMA

It should be noted that EGRA and EGMA tests results reported during the period under review were administered as a pilot in May – June, 2010. These results are therefore preliminary. Full-fledged baseline results are being analyzed, and will be made available during the next quarter.

Key EGRA findings revealed that in general, participating students' reading skills are weak. Whereas the situation improves slightly towards the 6th grade, primary school students do not read fluently enough to comprehend what they are reading. This is primarily due to low phonemic awareness, and children's weak ability to establish a relationship between a letter and its sound. Based upon these findings, it is recommended that the five major areas of reading – phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency and comprehension – be taught explicitly and systematically.

The main finding of the EGMA test shows that the participating students performed at levels well below those expected within the DR Congo curriculum. For example, students are capable of answering correctly only the most elementary items. Test results overall showed that students may, in some cases, have adequate procedural knowledge. However, participating students' conceptual knowledge – such as number sense and their understanding of geometric shapes – is relatively weak. Grade 2 students, for example, struggled to identify numbers greater than 20. Grade 6 students found it difficult to identify numbers greater than 10 000; working with fractions, decimals and percentages was likewise challenging for these students. The general observation is that 6th grade students are confident with aspects of the curriculum that 4th grade students are expected to know and understand, Grade 4 students are confident with aspects that grade 2 students should be able to comprehend and do, and so forth. The pilot study thus recommends that any attempt to address these knowledge and ability gaps should pay special attention to developing comprehension, reasoning, and application skills.

3.1.2 Teachers' Content Knowledge

Teachers were tested in French and Math. Overall, the results revealed serious weaknesses that closely reflect most of the gaps that were found among students through EGMA and EGRA tests.

French

Tests results revealed serious weaknesses among teachers in many areas including sentence formulation, reading comprehension, grammar usage, and language knowledge. Overall, it was found that teachers do not possess the communication skills required to teach the curriculum effectively.

Math

It was found that teachers performed better on simple rather than complex operations, notably on operations that require direct application of a routine procedure, operations that

involve whole numbers, and so forth. Participating teachers performed poorly on operations involving decimals or fractions. Analyses of test outcomes reveal that teachers do not appear to understand the underlying concepts underlying the math topics they are teaching.

Overall, these results paralleled the student outcomes obtained through EGRA and EGMA. Both teachers and students appear to have similar difficulties in French and Math. PAQUED programs must therefore focus upon strengthening teachers' skills and knowledge in order to improve both teaching and learning.

3.1.3 Teachers' pedagogical practices

As was the case with teacher content knowledge (TCK), teachers' pedagogical practices are characterized by serious gaps that can negatively affect learning among students. For example, the study revealed that most teachers believe that all children can read, write and develop math competencies, but that the capacities necessary for students to develop these competencies are acquired much later than expected within Ministry educational programs. In other words, teachers do not believe that students possess the capacity to realize their true potential, in terms of the students' real level of intellectual development.

As a consequence of these findings teachers tend to devote little time to activities designed to help students develop phonemic awareness, understanding, conventions of printed texts, and original and spontaneous language production. This trend further suggests that teachers themselves have limited understanding of reading and writing processes.

Most teachers (nine out of ten) consider reading and writing as two separate, sequential processes: one needs to learn how to read before learning how to write. Yet this view can limit the development of writing skills among students.

In short, the baseline study results analyzed thus far confirm the poor quality of education found in many RDC primary schools: students lack the understanding needed to perform exercises requiring skills beyond simple and procedural operations, or the most basic level of reading and writing. These preliminary results suggest that the same can be said of many teachers. To reverse these trends will require more resources and the combined efforts of all partners involved in education reform, including government representatives and institutions.

3.2. M&E OVERALL STRATEGY

3.2.1. Key M&E Documents

The project finalized its overall M&E manual (see annex 4) consistent with the recommendations of earlier work done by the consultant hired for that purpose. The manual provides detailed guidelines on a wide range of M&E activities, including data collection, storage and analysis, measures to ensure data validity, reliability and integrity, and reporting. The manual will serve not only as a guide for all project M&E activities, but also as training tool for field staff.

Additionally, the project further refined its PMP and M&E plan. USAID/DRC has provided comments and inputs, which are being incorporated in order to finalize these documents.

3.2.2. Developing a Database

The project began the process of developing a database that will capture and store data and information collected through monitoring and evaluation activities. The project is now in the process of recruiting a second consultant to complete these tasks.

4.0. NEW OPPORTUNITIES AND TRENDS

AFD

Having reviewed recently developed PAQUED products (i.e., teachers' profiles and baseline results), the French Cooperation Agency (AFD) has expressed interest in collaborating in PAQUED teacher training activities. AFD has indicated that, rather than conducting its own data collection activities to assess teachers' content knowledge in French or Math, it will instead make use of PAQUED's findings to develop its own training materials. Towards these ends, both parties plan to work together in the coming months as PAQUED begins preparing for the first summer institute (in July/August 2011).

OPEQ

As the new OPEQ project entered implementation phase, it has become clear that the development of the national in-service training policy (a key OPEQ deliverable) constitutes a critical area in which PAQUED's contribution will be required. PAQUED looks forward to making such contributions and to working collaboratively with OPEQ in other areas, such as on the development of teachers' training modules.

Projet d'Amélioration de la Qualité de l'Éducation (PAQUED)
Quarterly Report October 1 - December 31, 2010

5.0. SUCCESS STORY

(See annex 1)

6.0. PROJECT ACCOMPLISHMENTS VERSUS PLANNED ACTIVITIES

(See annex 2)

7.0. CALENDAR FOR NEXT QUARTER

A full list of activities planned for next quarter can be found in annex 3. The following list highlights some of these key activities:

- Move to new office premises
- First issue of the project newsletter
- Inaugurate the Resource Center in Bandundu
- Develop materials for the summer institute
- Continue teachers' training activities (Forum d'échange, Module 1 and 2) at the cluster level
- Start of broadcasting of IRI programs for grades 1 and 2
- Continue to develop script writing, and field testing of grade 3 and 4 literacy and numeracy programs, and the accompanying teachers' guide.
- Begin to prepare this year's summer institute
- Begin writing of the 2nd generation of community radio programs
- Distribute school and teachers' kits
- Begin to disburse community small grants

8.0. CHALLENGES AND CONSTRAINTS

8.1. DELAYED DELIVERY OF LIFEPLAYER RADIOS

PAQUED continues to face a critical challenge with regard to Lifeplay radio. In effect, a technical problem discovered in a sample of radios has forced the manufacturer to check every single unit. Unfortunately, the festivities of the Chinese New Year have further delayed the delivery of the radios. The earliest the project can reasonably expect to receive the radios and dispatch them to the targeted school is early March.

In addition to the production delays of the radio, the delivery of solar battery chargers that the project had envisioned as a backup solution will not arrive until March. The chargers are currently at the port of Hamburg and scheduled for departure on February 4. The shippers erroneously directed the chargers to Brazzaville, despite clear instruction from EDC for shipment to Kinshasa. EDC is in the process of ensuring that the cargo be redirected to Kinshasa.

The PAQUED team plans to begin broadcasting by early March using an alternative and temporary approach. We will work with communities to identify radios that can be used in the classroom during this interim phase. Head teachers will receive replacement batteries as part of the radio distribution. A clear communication plan to share this information will be developed with Ministry colleagues and communities. Clearly laid out guidelines will accompany the communication plan.

8.2. COMMUNITY SMALL GRANTS FOR SIP IMPLEMENTATION

As part of Project contribution to help communities improve the environment of their schools, PAQUED is expected to provide them with a \$2000 grant. However, given the need for the project to allocate more resources to the rehabilitation of IFCEPS, we anticipate to reduce that small grant to about \$1500. We are certainly aware that such an amount would help accomplish very little in the so badly deteriorated kind of environments that characterize most schools in the DR Congo. The project is still holding informal conversation with MEPSP authorities in the provinces to determine the best way of helping communities to use these grants funds. One idea that has emerged is that rather than providing these funds to each of 3000 the target school, we could select a few that are most in need, and provide their communities with more substantial resources so as to achieve more visible and lasting impact. We will engage USAID to further reflect on that idea, before possibly making it a formal request.



One of the Project target schools in Orientale Province