

EQUALL FY 2008 OPERATIONAL PLAN REPORT

Reporting Period: 1 October 2007 – 30 September 2008

This document summarizes EQUALL's contributions to USAID/Ghana's Basic Education Program Element of the FY 2008 Operational Plan. The report includes three sections: Operational Plan Indicator Targets and Achievements, Key Issues, and Funding Sub-Elements, each of which follow the guidelines provided by USAID, including USAID/Ghana's Indicator Reporting Reference Guide (IRRG), dated 5 June 2007, and performance narrative guidelines provided in October 2007. Note that a revised format and content of the Key Issues and Funding Sub-Elements sections was discussed and agreed to with William Osafo on 27 October 2008. Even with these revisions, there is considerable overlap between the Key Issues and Funding Sub-Elements sections, though this has been retained in order to satisfy the information required for each one.

SECTION ONE. OPERATIONAL PLAN INDICATOR TARGETS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Results for each of the 13 operational plan indicators that EQUALL contributes to are detailed in the tables below, based on guidance provided in the IRRG. Over the course of FY 2008, EQUALL developed a database to support reporting on key operational plan indicators, as well as other reporting requirements of the project. The database currently allows for entry of relevant data from project records and supplemental data collection activities and is used to report on indicators 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, and 1.9. Results for the other indicators are generated through the review of additional materials.

In each of the tables, an aggregated FY 2008 project total is presented against FY 2008 targets at the top, followed by specific figures by project component, where applicable. In cases where participants are counted from multiple components, both the total and exclusive participants for the component are presented. In order to avoid double counting of participants who receive training on more than one occasion either as part of the same component or with different components, EQUALL's database calculates exclusive participants both within and between components for each indicator. Cases where the appropriate figures for the FY 2008 period are not straightforward have been noted.

1.1 Number of administrators and officials trained

	FY 2008 Targets			FY 2008 Results		
	female	male	total	female	male	total
Aggregated Total	81	369	450	191	617	808
Program Component	Total Participants			Exclusive Participants		
	female	male	total	female	male	total
CEP	2	12	14	2	12	14
SEN	42	138	180	40	106	146
RIPE	57	201	258	39	120	159
EMI	110	379	489	110	379	489

Notes

1. CEP data refers to a training of trainers (TOT) workshop provided for the English component of the CEP. The workshop was conducted in June 2008. Note that all other TOT workshops for

CEP, as well as CST, conducted in FY 2008 were less than the minimum three day requirement to qualify for this indicator.

2. SEN data refers TOT workshops in inclusive education for DEO staff. A total of 10 workshops were carried out in the five target SEN districts in FY 2008. This data was provided by the Special Education Division.
3. RIPE data refers to Literacy Instructional Strategies (LIS) and Quality Monitoring Systems (QMS) TOT workshops carried out for District Teacher Support Teams (DTSTs) in cohort two and cohort three districts. Workshops were carried out in October 2007 and April 2008.
4. EMI data refers to management training for DEO staff, excluding those focusing on monitoring and evaluation. The data includes 22 management training workshops for 15 districts. Other EMI training and technical support activities carried out in FY 2008 were less than the minimum three day requirement to qualify for this indicator.

The target of 450 total participants trained in FY 2008 was exceeded by 358, for a total of 808. The targets for both females and males were also exceeded. This is due the fact that the projections in the IRRG anticipated participants only for the EMI component, which recorded a total of 489 for the reporting period.

1.2 Number of learners enrolled in USG-supported primary schools or equivalent non-school based settings

	FY 2008 Targets			FY 2008 Results		
	female	male	total	female	male	total
Aggregated Total	59,351	62,566	121,917	146,162	150,158	296,320
Program Component	Total Learners			Exclusive Learners		
	female	male	total	female	male	total
CEP	4,958	6,292	11,250	4,958	6,292	11,250
CST	19,762	20,420	40,182	19,411	20,060	39,471
CESP	2,463	70	2,533	914	70	984
SEN	24,034	24,924	48,958	23,890	24,792	48,682
COR	3,365	3,473	6,838	1,524	1,760	3,284
RIPE	95,465	97,184	192,649	95,465	97,184	192,649

Notes

1. CEP data refers to all learners enrolled in CEP classes in FY 2008, as collected by EQUALL.
2. CST data refers to all P1-P3 learners enrolled in schools to which a CST is assigned. Data on enrolment in CST schools was collected in partnership with the GES in the third term of the 2007-2008 academic year.
3. CESP data refers to all learners receiving scholarships for the 2007-2008 academic year.
4. SEN data refers to all P1-P6 learners from schools benefiting from the SEN Inclusive Education training. This data was provided by the Special Education Division. Note that for the purposes of this report, EQUALL has not cross-referenced school-level data with that of the RIPE or CST programs. Rather, an assumption has been made that any P1-P3 SEN learners in RIPE or CST districts have already been counted in those categories and these learners are not reflected in the exclusive learners columns.
5. COR data refers to all P1-P6 learners enrolled in 35 COR schools. All of these schools are also RIPE schools, serving P1-P3 learners.

6. RIPE data refers to all P1-P3 learners enrolled in RIPE schools. Data on enrolment in RIPE schools was collected by DEO officials in the third term of the 2007-2008 academic year.

The target of 121,917 was exceeded by 174,403 due to several factors. The IRRG projections did not take into account CESP or SEN learners, nor did they include the P4-P6 learners in the COR schools. The target for the CEP was met exactly and the target for CST was close (target of 35,964 against an actual of 39,471). There was, however, a large difference in the number of learners from the RIPE schools (target of 74,703 against an actual of 192,649) as a result of the continuation of support to all BTL/BTE schools in cohorts one and two and the expansion of LIS/QMS to all schools in cohort three.

1.3 Number of teachers and educators trained with USG support

	FY 2008 Targets			FY 2008 Results		
	female	male	total	female	male	total
Aggregated Total	2,311	3,681	5,992	14,296	16,188	30,484
Program Component	Total Learners			Exclusive Learners		
	female	male	total	female	male	total
CEP	90	461	551	90	461	551
CST	173	519	692	141	309	450
ODL	9,293	11,322	20,615	9,268	11,237	20,505
SEN	996	920	1,916	563	447	1,010
RIPE	3,996	3,088	7,084	3,996	3,088	7,084
EMI	344	876	1,220	238	646	884

Notes

1. CEP data refers to CEP facilitators trained in FY 2008 and includes supplemental facilitators trained to handle the CEP English component. During FY 2008, refresher training activities were carried out in December 2007 and April 2008 and CEP English training was carried out in June 2008.
2. CST data refers to CSTs trained in FY 2008, as well as head teachers and P1-P3 teachers from CST schools who received training during the year. During FY 2008, refresher training activities were carried out in December 2007 and April 2008, head teacher orientation training was carried out in November 2007, and P1-P3 teacher training was carried out in March 2008.
3. ODL data refers to the UTT/DBEP participants across the program and was calculated as follows. The total number of participants who enrolled in the program is 21,919, including 9,881 females and 12,038 males. In January 2007, EQUALL received figures from the Teacher Education Division (TED) of GES indicating that 1,304 participants had dropped out of the program, but no gender breakdown of participants was provided. This represents a 6% dropout rate, so EQUALL reduced both the female and male participants by 6%, resulting in estimates of 9,293 females and 11,322 males for a total of 20,615 participants.
7. SEN data refers to teachers trained in inclusive education in the five target districts. This data was provided by the Special Education Division. Note that for the purposes of this report, EQUALL has not cross-referenced school-level data with that of the RIPE or CST programs. Rather, an assumption has been made that any SEN teachers in RIPE or CST districts have already been counted in those categories and these teachers are not reflected in the exclusive teachers columns.

4. RIPE data refers to teachers trained by the DTSTs using District Incentive Grant (DIG) funds. During the reporting period, 34 BTL/BTE workshops and 46 LIS/QMS workshops were conducted in 19 districts. Training participant figures were supplied by the DEOs.
5. EMI data refers to teachers and other educators trained by DEO staff members, or external resource people, using DIG funds. These activities include management training, including monitoring and evaluation, for SMC/PTA executives, head teachers, and other DEO staff members, as well as teacher training activities. During the reporting period, 27 workshops were carried out in 15 districts.

The target of 5,992 was exceeded by 24,492 as a result of the inclusion of teachers supported under the SEN and EMI components, slightly higher than projected results for the CEP and CST components, and substantially higher results for the ODL and RIPE components. For ODL, all UTT/DBEP participants have been included, rather than only those in the three northern regions. If only those in the three northern regions are counted, the ODL figure would reduce to 5,201 (2,113 female and 3,088 male), with exclusive participants reducing to 5,091 (2,088 female and 3,003 male). For RIPE, increases were a result of the continuation of support to all BTL/BTE schools in cohorts one and two and the expansion of LIS/QMS to all schools in cohort three.

1.4 Number of Parent-Teacher-Association or similar 'school' governance structures supported

	FY 2008 Target	FY 2008 Result
Aggregated Total	450	450
CEP		450

Notes

1. CEP data refers to the number of Local Committees trained, either in initial or refresher training, during FY 2008 to support the CEP classes.

The target of 450 was achieved as planned.

1.5 Number of textbooks and other teaching and learning materials provided with USG assistance

Program Component	FY 2008 Target	FY 2008 Result
Aggregated Total	128,810	135,217
CST		73,375
RIPE		61,842

Notes

1. CST data refers to literacy and numeracy primers distributed to learners in CST schools and in schools where P1-P3 teachers have benefitted from CEP/CST training. In FY 2008, materials were distributed to 157 CST schools and 108 additional schools.
2. RIPE data is a compilation of materials distributed under the BTL/BTE and LIS/QMS strategies. For BTL/BTE, 27 BTL, 114 BTE 1, and 309 BTE 3 kits were distributed to BTL/BTE schools in 12 cohort one and cohort two districts. Each BTL kit includes 1 teacher's guide, 1 teacher's sentence maker, 1 teacher's sentence holder, 25 learner activity books, 50 learner sentence

makers, 50 learner sentence holders, 40 readers, 35 phonic posters, and 4 conversation posters, giving a total of 207 items per kit. Each BTE kit includes 1 teacher's guide, 50 learner activity books, 2 wall charts, and 50 readers, giving a total of 103 items per kit. For LIS/QMS, materials were distributed to 1,057 schools in 15 cohort two and cohort three districts. Each school received 6 copies each of the LIS/QMS manuals, giving a total of 12 items per school.

The target of 128,810 was exceeded by 6,407 despite the fact that the projections included materials for 450 classes that operated in FY 2008. Materials for these classes were actually distributed in September 2007 and reported in EQUALL's FY 2007 Operational Plan Report. If materials distributed for use in FY 2008 are to be reported, a total of 112,950 materials could be included for CEP, based on the distribution of 450 kits, each containing 1 facilitator's manual, 75 literacy primers, 50 numeracy books, 25 writing books, and 100 exercise books, for a total of 251 items per kit. Inclusion of these CEP materials would bring the total result to 248,167.

1.6 Does your program support Education Systems/Policy reform? If yes, describe the contributions of your program, including progress against any Mission-level outcome or impact indicators

During FY 2008, EQUALL supported education systems/policy reform in the following areas:

- EQUALL transitioned 6,346 CEP graduates, including 3,141 girls, into the formal school system for the 2007-2008 academic year, contributing to greater enrolment rates and gender parity. Mother tongue instructional classes, with a transition to English, were also provided to an additional 11,250 learners.
- EQUALL supported the Basic Education Division (BED) of the GES, utilizing experiences of the CEP to inform ongoing development and refinement of the Complementary Basic Education policy document.
- EQUALL supported the Special Education Division (SpED) of the GES to establish a framework for the implementation of an inclusive education program that is intended to ultimately be expanded across the country.
- EQUALL continued to support the National Literacy Task Force to develop a new national literacy program. The program has been partially informed by EQUALL's experiences with the BTL/BTE program and has been integrated into the RIPE program for implementation in FY 2009.
- EQUALL continued to support the Curriculum Research and Development Division (CRDD) of the GES to implement the Basic Education Comprehensive Assessment System (BECAS) in order to strengthen their ability to fully integrate it at the national level.
- EQUALL provided management training, technical support, and funding to 20 District Education Offices (DEOs), building their capacity to adapt to an increasingly decentralized education system.

1.7 Number of host country institutions with improved Management Information Systems as a result of USG assistance

	FY 2008 Target	FY 2008 Result
Aggregated Total	20	20
EMI		20

Notes

- All 20 EQUALL partner districts received support to develop or improve systems for entering, storing, and managing data related to district education.

The target of 20 was achieved.

1.8 Number of host country institutions that have used USG-assisted MIS system information to inform administrative/management decisions

Program Component	FY 2008 Target	FY 2008 Result
Aggregated Total	15	20
EMI		20

Notes

- All 20 EQUALL partner districts were awarded district incentive grants in FY 2008, based on applications submitted in September 2007. The evaluation criteria for the awards included the use of data and information in planning.

The target of 15 was exceeded based on a revised project strategy to continue support for five cohort one districts, including financial support through the district incentive grant program, through the end of the 2008 calendar year.

1.9 Number of people trained in monitoring and evaluation with USG assistance

	FY 2008 Targets			FY 2008 Results		
	female	male	total	female	male	total
Aggregated Total	16	72	88	82	252	334
Program Component	Total Participants			Exclusive Participants		
	female	male	total	female	male	total
EMI	70	213	283	70	213	283
PME	12	49	61	12	39	51

Notes

- EMI data refers to DEO officers who received training in monitoring and evaluation in FY 2008. During the reporting period, 10 workshops were carried out in 9 districts.
- PME data refers to training provided to data collectors who supported the FY 2008 data collection process. This training was carried out in June 2008. Note that this indicator includes only the training of data collectors for the teacher assessment; trainings for pupil assessment and district assessment are fewer than the three day minimum to qualify for this indicator.

The target of 88 was exceeded by 246, primarily due to a change in strategy on monitoring and evaluation training for the DEOs. While EQUALL had originally worked with four officers per district, beginning in FY 2007, M&E training activities were expanded to the larger DEO staff based on requests from the districts. The IRRG projections also do not take EQUALL's PME training into account.

1.10 Number of baseline or feasibility studies prepared by the USG

As projected in the IRRG, EQUALL does not have any results to report for this indicator for FY 2008.

1.11 Number of monitoring plans prepared by the USG

As projected in the IRRG, EQUALL does not have any results to report for this indicator for FY 2008.

1.12 Number of evaluations conducted by the USG

Program Component	FY 2008 Target	FY 2008 Result
Aggregated Total	0	1
COR		1

Notes

1. In FY 2008, EQUALL carried out an impact study of the Culture of Reading pilot program.

EQUALL achieved a result of one against a target of zero. The COR impact study was not taken into consideration during the development of the IRRG. Note that the IRRG does reference an evaluation of the EQUALL project, but it is EQUALL's understanding that this was intended to be carried out by USAID.

1.13 Number of special studies conducted by the USG

As projected in the IRRG, EQUALL does not have any results to report for this indicator for FY 2008.

SECTION TWO. KEY ISSUES

The EQUALL project contributed to four of the key issues identified by USAID/Ghana: Africa Education Initiative, Community Mobilization/Participation, Increasing Gender Equity, and Local Organization Capacity Development. Key achievements and shortfalls for the reporting period are discussed for each of the issues. Following the four key issues are sections discussing the impact of host country commitment and performance on program performance and evaluations that have been conducted.

2.1 Africa Education Initiative

During FY 2008, the majority of EQUALL's funding came through the Africa Education Initiative, with funding for both pre-service and in-service activities. The following eight program components were carried out either in part or in full with AEI funds: Complementary Education Program (CEP), Community Support Teachers (CST), Open and Distance Learning (ODL), Special Education Needs (SEN), Literacy Learning Milestones (LLM), Reading Improvement in Primary Education (RIPE), Culture of Reading (COR), and Education Management Improvement (EMI).

During FY 2008, the CEP, CST, ODL, SEN, and LLM components all reached the final stages of program implementation. In the CEP, 11,250 learners from 450 communities were served over the reporting period, bringing the life of project total to 26,250. A total of 381 CSTs taught during the 2007-2008 academic year and efforts began to get these volunteers integrated into GES as pupil teachers. EQUALL also continued to provide targeted support to the Untrained Teacher Diploma in Basic Education Program (UTT/DBEP), which has served more than 20,000 pupil teachers, with a final activity designed to assist the GES to design an evaluation of the program. For the SEN component, EQUALL provided direct support to the Special Education Division (SpED) of the GES to implement their inclusive education program in five districts, reaching more than 50,000 teachers. Following pilot implementation in one district, EQUALL's LLM component folded into the Literacy Support Initiative, as the literacy standards and milestones formed the basis for the development of the National Literacy Acceleration Program (NALAP).

The RIPE program was implemented using two main strategies in FY 2008. EQUALL continued to support the implementation of the Breakthrough to Literacy /Bridge to English (BTL/BTE) instructional model in 12 districts and 691 schools, representing those districts and schools that had begun the program prior to a decision by the MOESS/GES to discontinue the expansion. After an extended suspension of a formal RIPE program in EQUALL's cohort three districts, during FY 2008, EQUALL introduced the Literacy Instructional Strategies (LIS) and Quality Monitoring Systems (QMS) approaches to establish a foundation for the introduction of NALAP, originally scheduled to be introduced in early FY 2009. The LIS/QMS instructional modules were introduced in a total of 1,094 schools, including cycle three schools in cohort two districts and all primary schools in cohort three districts.

EQUALL concluded its three-year Culture of Reading pilot in FY 2008, having gained valuable insight into successful strategies for both the school and community to build interest and excitement around learning. Results of the COR pilot are evident in the teaching strategies incorporated into the NALAP teacher guides and in the emphasis being placed on the social marketing component of the overall NALAP design. In addition, following capacity building activities provided by EQUALL, several of EQUALL's partner districts extended the strategies developed through the COR pilot to their own schools and communities as part of their larger efforts to improve literacy.

During FY 2008, EQUALL continued to provide management training, technical support, and financial support to 20 partner districts to build and enhance capacities, especially at the District Education Office, in planning, decision-making and overall management and their impact on learning outcomes, particularly reading. In October 2007, following an assessment of management capacity and a review of proposals, EQUALL awarded approximately \$690,000 to the 20 districts to support activity plans for the 2008 calendar year. Throughout FY 2008, EQUALL carried out a number of demand-driven trainings and technical support visits, including management training on supervision, financial management, training of trainers in Participatory Learning and Action (PLA), Data Analysis, and training of trainers on the roles and responsibilities of School Management Committees (SMCs) and Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs). Results of external data collection activities indicate that EQUALL's partner districts have steadily improved their performance in critical areas of education management including participatory management, performance monitoring and evaluation, and financial transparency.

2.2 Community Mobilization/Participation

EQUALL's Complementary Education Program (CEP) and Community Support Teachers (CST) programs are most directly involved in community mobilization activities, although EQUALL's Education Management Improvement (EMI) program also supports community mobilization activities through the District Incentive Grant (DIG) activity. During FY 2008, EQUALL provided support to 450 Local Committees as they managed and supervised the CEP classes in their communities. Throughout the year, EQUALL worked both with the Local Committees and through other

community groups to provide support to the CEP facilitators and CSTs, who receive only a small stipend from EQUALL. Also during FY 2008, EQUALL provided funding to 20 partner districts, through the DIG, to carry out education improvement activities. These districts have also been benefiting from the Government Accountability Improves Trust (GAIT II) project and many of them utilized their DIG funding to replicate Participatory Learning and Action (PLA) and School Management Committee (SMC) and Parent Teacher Association (PTA) training activities in communities not receiving direct support from GAIT II.

2.3 Increasing Gender Equity

EQUALL primarily addresses gender equity in three program components: Complementary Education Program (CEP), Community Support Teachers (CST), and Complementary Education Scholarship Program (CESP). The primary objective of the CEP is to increase access to formal education for school-age children, especially girls, by providing them with foundational skills in literacy and numeracy to enable them to transition into formal schools. Because girls are frequently held back from school for domestic or economic reasons, CEP classes are scheduled at the convenience of the parents and learners. In September and October 2007, 3,389 girls, or 94%, graduated from the CEP and 3,141, or 93% of those who graduated, enrolled in the formal schools. The transition rates for girls were higher than those of boys, in part due to the CESP, which provided scholarships to 1,500 of the girls. In October 2007, EQUALL registered 11,250 new children into the CEP, including 4,955 girls. EQUALL expects that approximately 94% of these girls will graduate, but graduation and transition activities are currently still ongoing due to accessibility issues created by severe rain over the past several months.

In both the CEP and CST, EQUALL continued to encourage the involvement of females, though no sizeable recruitment of CEP facilitators or CSTs was carried out in FY 2008, given the fact that these program components will be completed in December 2008. Activities organized through the CESP, including community drama and durbars, girls' education fairs, mentor camps, and essay contests provided greater emphasis on the roles that women from all walks of life play in ensuring equitable educational and professional opportunities for girls and women. EQUALL also supported an Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) campaign aimed toward spreading positive messages of the importance and benefits of girls' education. Finally, the food rations portion of the CESP encourages attendance, and ultimately retention, of girls once they have enrolled in the formal schools.

2.4 Local Organization Capacity Development

EQUALL's work in local organization capacity development is primarily centered on the Literacy Support Initiative (LSI), Education Management Improvement (EMI), and National Assessment Support System (NASS) components, although EQUALL's partnerships with government counterpart divisions on all activities also contribute to capacity development.

During FY 2008, EQUALL's LSI component provided substantial technical support to the National Literacy Task Force (NLTF) of the GES in the design of the National Literacy Acceleration Program (NALAP). Over the period, EQUALL assisted the NLTF to develop pupil books for three levels and in 11 languages, teacher guides for five levels, 30 story books each in 11 languages, and other teaching and learning materials. The approach included bringing together international and local consultants with key NLTF and GES staff members so that each activity was geared toward not only producing the needed materials, but also to strengthening the capacity of the GES to continue to produce similar materials in the future. EQUALL also partnered with the NLTF and other divisions within the GES to draft a training strategy for the initial implementation of the program.

As detailed above, during FY 2008, EQUALL's EMI program provided management support to District Education Offices (DEOs) through training, technical assistance, and incentive grants. During the period, 20 districts were awarded funding of approximately \$690,000 based on their past performance and management capacity, as well as the submission of proposals that were evaluated against several key areas of management. During the year, EQUALL was also able to provide multiple training and technical support activities specifically geared toward needs identified by the partner districts.

With the NASS, EQUALL is providing support to the Assessment Services Unit (ASU) of the Curriculum Research and Development Division (CRDD) of the GES to implement the Basic Education Comprehensive Assessment System (BECAS). In addition to assisting with the implementation of School Education Assessment (SEA), during FY 2008, EQUALL helped to finalize the report of the National Education Assessment (NEA), administered in July 2007, and facilitated a workshop to develop new items for both the SEA and NEA. EQUALL also participated in several meetings and discussions to determine the best approach for ensuring that the ASU is able to independently continue with BECAS following the completion of EQUALL support in February 2009.

2.5 Impact of Host Country Commitment and Performance on Program Performance

EQUALL considers host country commitment, including that of the education system, local government, and civil society to be the key ingredient to sustained impact of program initiatives.

During FY 2008, EQUALL focused extensively on strengthening partnerships with DEOs to better support them in their efforts to improve educational quality. EQUALL's District Partnership Coordination (DPC) unit conducted Partnership Planning Meetings (PPMs) in all partner districts, with the objective to create an opportunity for partner districts to freely discuss their major challenges related to education quality improvement and open dialogue between the district and EQUALL as to how the project could help address relevant challenges as a means of assisting the project to become more tailored to specific district needs. The meetings were well attended with stakeholder representation from DEOs, District Assemblies (Das), SMCs, PTAs, Civic Unions, Traditional Authorities, Local Managers of Churches, and Civil Society Groups. Discussions focused on the major constraints that districts perceive in their work to improve quality education, evidence supporting the constraints, factors influencing the constraints, and specific strategies (including specific actions) which districts designed to overcome or minimize them. Within this discussion, areas of technical or financial support that could be provided through EQUALL were also identified. The constraints identified during the 2007 PPMs and the related strategies were reviewed during the 2008 PPMs and new actions were taken to address the challenges. The development of District Partnership Plans created a framework for EQUALL's various components to strategize on the type of support to provide to partner districts and strengthened EQUALL's abilities to tailor the support provided to districts in order to increase commitment and improvement performance at the district level.

Also during FY 2008, EQUALL put greater emphasis on growing the partnerships with GES that will lead to sustainability of EQUALL's impacts, particularly for those components that would be phasing out. EQUALL organized a sustainability workshop for stakeholders and discussed strategies towards sustaining CEP activities in the cohort three districts. During the workshop, the Director of Basic Education's representative presented a paper and explained that the Basic Education division of GES was working hard to ensure that the Complementary Basic Education Policy document was finally approved by the MOESS/GES and Complementary Education mainstreamed into the formal system. Following the lead of the GES, the DfID Education Program Adviser made a commitment to support the continuation of activities in the cohort three districts following the phase out of CEP in December 2008. EQUALL also intensified its interactions with the Girls' Education Unit, which has always

been a key partner in the implementation of CESP, in preparation for the completion of the EQUALL supported program in FY 2009.

EQUALL's work with the national level GES intensified in FY 2008, with the LSI support to NALAP joining EQUALL's other components that directly support GES programs, including with the inclusive education program of SpED and the distance learning program being implemented by TED. Under LSI, EQUALL provided a key technical support mechanism to the NLTF to evolve a new literacy and language approach viable for national expansion. EQUALL contributed by sharing the rich in-service teacher training and material development experiences gained in implementing a successful bilingual literacy program (BTL/BTE) and other literacy improvement activities in 20 districts. EQUALL staff also participated in the development and trialing of NALAP materials. All activities carried out under LSI were planned and carried out jointly with the NLTF and in general, this linkage and articulation to work together was effective.

As in prior years, national representatives of the MOESS and GES actively participated in EQUALL's district incentive grant process. Five out of the nine people that constituted the 2008 DIG application review team represented partner organizations: MOESS (1), GES (2), USAID (1) and GAIT II (1). Two of the people from the MOESS and GES had taken part in the 2007 grant application review and gave good impressions about the processes, the steady improvement in the quality of the applications, and the reports on the implementation of prior year grant funded activities. One of these people is the schedule officer at GES responsible for a World Bank funded Pilot Programmatic Scheme (PPS). He was impressed by the successes being achieved by EQUALL and intimated that his office was going to use relevant lessons learned from the DIG implementation to inform that of the PPS.

Overall, this focus on building partnerships with host country institutions has led to greater levels of commitment, strengthened the results being achieved by EQUALL, and created opportunities for spreading and sustaining the results throughout Ghana.

2.6 Evaluations Conducted

From June through August 2008, EQUALL carried out its annual external assessment of project impact, including assessment of teacher and learner performance in the CEP, CST, and RIPE programs and assessment of district level management performance in the EMI program. Overall results for FY 2008 included increases in all measures of district management performance, including participatory management, performance monitoring and evaluation, financial transparency, and reading program implementation. All 20 EQUALL partner districts had demonstrated high performance in both participatory management and performance monitoring and evaluation. English language literacy levels improved for RIPE learners from all three cohorts, while local language literacy levels remained constant for cohort one and improved for cohorts two and three. Teacher performance levels in the RIPE program declined in both cohort one and cohort two, but improved in cohort three. Both teacher and learner performance declined in both the CEP and CST schools, though EQUALL believes that this is largely due to the continuing effects of the introduction of the capitation grant program two years ago, which will be discussed in greater detail on EQUALL's FY 2008 Annual Report. This report will also include more in-depth analysis of EQUALL's results. Greater detail on the initial evaluation results can be found in EQUALL's FY 2008 R4 Report, submitted under separate cover.

In July 2008, EQUALL carried out a study to assess the impacts of the social marketing component of the Culture of Reading pilot. This study revealed that the program had been successful in changing attitudes and behaviors around reading in the targeted communities. A full report of the evaluation study has been prepared, though it should also be noted that this study will be integrated into an overall final report of the Culture of Reading pilot, to be submitted under separate cover.

SECTION THREE. FUNDING SUB-ELEMENTS

The EQUALL project benefited from four funding sub-elements as identified by USAID/Ghana: Primary Education, Education Systems, Host Country Strategic Information Capacity, and Program Design and Learning. Key achievements and shortfalls for the reporting period are detailed for each of the funding sub-elements.

3.1 Primary Education

EQUALL supports primary education through a number of program components, but most directly with the Complementary Education Program (CEP), Complementary Education Scholarship Program (CESP), Community Support Teacher (CST), Reading Improvement in Primary Education (RIPE), and Literacy Support Initiative (LSI) components.

During FY 2008, EQUALL supported children from 450 communities with the CEP, 277 primary schools in six districts with the CST program, and 1,750 primary schools in 13 districts under the RIPE program. In addition, 2,533 children were provided with scholarships for the 2007-2008 academic year through the CESP. The CEP provides an 11-month mother-tongue literacy and numeracy and oral English program to out-of-school children of school-going age, in order to prepare them to enter (or in some cases re-enter) the formal school system. With the CST program, volunteer teachers are recruited to fill vacant classrooms and adapt CEP methodologies for mother-tongue literacy and numeracy in the formal classroom, as well as cover all other areas of the curriculum. The RIPE program provides DEO officers and teachers with capacity and materials to build literacy skills in mother tongue and in English; during FY 2008, the RIPE program implemented both the BTL/BTE and LIS/QMS methodologies. The CESP provides scholarships primarily to female graduates of the CEP, but also to a limited number of children with special education needs.

EQUALL's work under LSI in FY 2008 focused on supporting the National Literacy Task Force (NLTF) of the GES to develop national literacy program approaches and materials as part of the National Literacy Acceleration Program (NALAP). This bilingual transitional literacy program will be introduced into every primary school in Ghana in FY 2009.

3.2 Education Systems

EQUALL's work in the area of Education Systems is primarily centered on the Education Management Improvement (EMI) component, which provides management training and technical support to District Education Offices (DEOs), as well as providing opportunities to access additional funding. The focus of the component is to build and enhance capacities in planning, decision-making, and overall management and their impact on learning outcomes, particularly reading. Throughout FY 2008, EQUALL continued to provide demand-driven management training and technical support based on partnership plans developed with each district. In October 2007, EQUALL awarded District Incentive Grants ranging from approximately \$20,000 to \$45,000 to 20 partner districts, with a total of approximately \$690,000 allocated. The combined effect of the DIG, management training, and technical support contributed to a steady improvement in management practices in many districts, increased stakeholder participation, and improved pupil performance.

3.3 Host Country Strategic Information Capacity

EQUALL's work in the area of Host Country Strategic Information Capacity is primarily centered on the Education Management Improvement (EMI) and National Assessment System Support (NASS) components.

The EMI component supports districts to improve the quality of their monitoring and evaluation systems and to utilize the outputs of the system for strategic planning. This support is provided through training workshops in monitoring and evaluation, technical support visits at the district level, and financing to carry out monitoring and evaluation activities at both the district and school-community level. The evaluation of DEO incentive grant proposals includes criteria on the Use of Data in Planning and Sound Monitoring and Evaluation Plan. In FY 2008, scores in these areas respectively accounted for 20% and 10% of a district's overall score. Over the course of FY 2008, EQUALL also provided targeted training in monitoring and evaluation to 344 DEO officials.

Throughout FY 2008, EQUALL continued to provide support to the Assessment Services Unit (ASU) of the Curriculum Research and Development Division (CRDD) of the GES to implement the Basic Education Comprehensive Assessment System (BECAS), which includes annual national testing in English literacy and numeracy. On a bi-annual basis, BECAS conducts a national assessment of performance, providing policy makers at the national level with tools to assess national strategies and develop strategies for the future. In the alternating years, a school-level assessment is carried out, also nationally, but as a tool for school-communities and decentralized education offices to use in planning.

3.4 Program Design and Learning

In July 2008, EQUALL carried out a study to assess the impacts of the social marketing component of the Culture of Reading pilot. This study revealed that the program had been successful in changing attitudes and behaviors around reading in the targeted communities. A full report of the evaluation study has been prepared, though it should also be noted that this study will be integrated into an overall final report of the Culture of Reading pilot, to be submitted under separate cover.

EQUALL also carried out its annual external assessment of project impact in June through August 2008, but this activity does not seem to qualify under Program Design and Learning, according to the Foreign Assistance Standardized Program Structure and Definitions, dated October 20, 2006, which states that 'activities carried out by partners as an integral part of their monitoring and evaluation efforts for programs funded under other sub-elements should be included within those sub-elements'.