

Academy for Educational Development

Aga Khan Foundation

American Institutes for Research

CARE

*Center for Collaboration and the Future
of Schooling*

East-West Center

Education Development Center

International Rescue Committee

Joseph P. Kennedy, Jr. Foundation

Michigan State University

*Mississippi Consortium for International
Development*

ORC Macro

Research Triangle Institute

University of Minnesota

University of Pittsburgh

*Women's Commission for Refugee
Women and Children*



Quarterly Report and Annual Review October - December 2005



Submitted by:

Academy for Educational Development

01/31/2006

U.S. Agency for International Development
Cooperative Agreement No. GDG-A-00-03-00008-00

EQUIP2: Education Policy, Systems Development, and Management

I. Objectives of EQUIP2

The Education Quality Improvement Program 2 (EQUIP2) Leader with Associates (LWA) Award for Education Policy, Systems Development, and Management was awarded on January 30, 2003. The broad objectives of the Cooperative Agreement are to:

- Assist countries to develop, manage, and monitor education sector policies and plans that support national macroeconomic plans;
- Reinforce the national Education for All (EFA) planning committee, the decentralization of education, and the involvement of civil society in planning for education and out-of-school children and youth programming;
- Support the design, development, and improvement of education data collection, storage, analysis, and application systems; and
- Strengthen education administration, management, finance, and planning.

The report is divided into sections addressing the Leader and Associate Awards.

II. Leader Award: Activities and Accomplishments, October to December 2005

The quarter ending December 30, 2005 includes work done in October, November, and December 2005. During this period, EQUIP2 emphasized work on its component of a pilot United States Agency for International Development (USAID) education officer training, the EQUIP2 Quarterly Partners Meeting, new research on school fees, a videoconference on Decentralization of Education in Africa, and completion of its work for the year in the areas of complementary education, decentralization, and monitoring and evaluation (M&E). EQUIP2 signed Associate Awards for El Salvador and Southern Sudan this quarter.

Specific Activities this Quarter

Program Management

The EQUIP2 team finalized Leader Award work this quarter and began developing the 2006 annual workplan, which includes new research on schools fees. Specific activities related to program management are discussed below:

- Dr. David Chapman (University of Minnesota) and Dr. David Plank (Michigan State University), both on sabbatical from their respective universities, joined the EQUIP2 team in October 2005. Dr. Plank provides leadership to the team working on school fees. The school fees research is developing an argument to counter a movement in the U.S. Congress to use education sector funds to abolish school fees. Dr. Chapman leads research in the area of donor effectiveness, synthesizing lessons from USAID efforts to strengthen education systems in the last 10 years.
- EQUIP2 Project Director John Gillies attended cognizant technical officer (CTO) meetings addressing evaluation feedback from the pilot USAID training, school fees work, EQUIP2

annual planning for EQUIP2, and Economic Growth, Agriculture, and Trade (EGAT) budget impact on EQUIP. USAID confirmed that the current outlook indicates the possibility of over \$1 million in reduced life of project funding for EQUIP. John Gillies, Deputy Director Audrey Moore, and Finance Officer Nassima Briggs began to look at the programmatic implications of this level of cutback and its impact on EQUIP2 staffing and activities for 2006.

- EQUIP2 held its Quarterly Partners Meeting on December 7, 2005. The meeting brought together an audience with varied exposure to the EQUIP2 Leader work for discussion that centered on 2006 program area work plans, other EQUIP2 Leader projects—notably the school fees work—and opportunities for integrating some of the separate strands of Leader work in an environment of tighter budgets. Suggested action steps for January 2006 included:
 - Creation of a managerial-operational link between complementary education and decentralization.
 - Submission of a revised education reform publication by Joe DeStefano and Luis Crouch.
 - Documentation of the experience and lessons learned from the videoconference to provide guidance in the future.
 - A case study of John Gillies and Audrey Moore’s experience in Egypt when they facilitated a discussion on “The Seven Elements of Education Reform.”
- John Gillies and Audrey Moore met with Dean Nielsen of the World Bank to discuss collaborative research. They shared EQUIP2’s complementary education work on cost-effectiveness with Mr. Nielsen, who later cited EQUIP2 in a World Bank publication on donor effectiveness. The meeting resulted in a continuing dialogue on avenues of mutual interest (e.g., collaborative workshops, conferences, research).
- EQUIP2 held several meetings with CTOs, project directors, and others to finalize a new structure for the Patterns Database. The database presently identifies clusters of projects focusing on particular themes, approaches, groups, curriculum areas, levels in the system, or country environments. The team is improving database design to link individual activities, approaches, and theme levels across clusters so that results can be grouped around particular issues, not just intervention themes (e.g., which projects impacted learning outcomes). The updated database will be ready in the first quarter of 2006.
- David Chapman, Audrey Moore, and John Gillies finalized an approach for monitoring and evaluating EQUIP2 awards, which will commence upon USAID approval. The proposed meta-evaluation will explore general theories, propositions, and/or hypotheses for reform in the context of education policies and programs. The study will answer three questions:
 - What were the trends in USAID/EQUIP efforts/propositions/ hypotheses to strengthen and improve basic education in the developing world?
 - How well did these education projects perform?
 - What insights were gained from these investments that contribute to the understanding of changing the conditions for reform to ensure sustainability and ownership?

Cost-Share Activities

- The EQUIP2 partnership continued to develop options and strategies for cost-share. John Gillies is working to develop program concepts and gain agreement from partners about the direction and funding. Several initiatives have not been successful, either because external

partners were unable to find resources, or because the activities were not attractive to USAID. The CTO and project director have been in active dialogue about feasible approaches.

- John Gillies has been working in collaboration with Academy for Educational Development (AED) senior management for more than six months to explore the potential for conducting a regional seminar on workforce development in the Middle East. Other contributors include a private foundation, The World Bank, and EQUIP3. The initiative moved forward as meetings were held with the Qatar Foundation to secure core funding and logistics support.
- AED is in negotiations with the Conference Board to support a major conference on public-private partnerships for education in collaboration. AED held multiple planning meetings with the Conference Board and is negotiating additional funding from various private sector firms, including Intel, which has committed core funding for the conference..
- RTI and EDC have proposed the use of interns and seconded staff from the World Bank to meet their cost share requirements.
- EQUIP2 is exploring development of an M&E manual in collaboration with National Center for Human Resourced Development (NCHRD), the organization that provides leadership to evaluation under the Jordan Education Reform for the Knowledge Economy (ERfKE) Initiative.
- John Gillies and other AED managers have met several times with Microsoft to discuss a collaborative approach to evaluation of education projects. Several coordination meetings were held in October and November. Follow-up meetings will be held during the first quarter of 2006.

Support to USAID

- The EQUIPs assisted USAID/EGAT/Education in the implementation of a pilot training program for USAID education officers in Hagerstown, Maryland in October. The EQUIP2 sessions on education sector reform were the highest rated sessions of the training. EQUIP2 Deputy Director Tom Lent and Joe DeStefano of the Center for Collaboration and the Future of Schooling (CCFS) facilitated the training, and EQUIP2 technical presentations included education finance with Luis Crouch of USAID, a case study on the components of successful reform with David Plank and Audrey Moore, education reform with Joe DeStefano, education data with John Gillies, decentralization with Don Winkler, and corruption with David Chapman. This activity was an unplanned component that was added on relatively short notice in response to USAID interest in implementing a new training program.

EQUIP2 Communications

During the fourth quarter of Project Year 2005, the EQUIP2 Communications Team continued to develop its website at http://www.equip123.net/equip2/index_new.html, focusing on increase and improvement of Leader Award content online. From October to December 2005, the EQUIP website accumulated its highest quarterly total of hits at 550,402, including a monthly record of 200,614 in October; its highest quarterly total of page views at 139,427, including a monthly record of 56,905 in December; and its highest quarterly total of unique visits at 53,942, including a monthly record of 19,869 in December.

EQUIP2 published in print its new Working Paper and Issues Brief on *Meeting EFA: Cost-Effectiveness of Complementary Approaches*, the fourth Policy Brief in its recent Decentralization series on *Public Expenditure Tracking in Education*, and a revised second edition of its Policy Brief on *Strengthening Accountability and Participation: School Self-Assessment in Namibia*. All new EQUIP2 publications have been submitted to USAID DEC and other relevant clearinghouses and are available for download from the EQUIP website. The full list of EQUIP2 Leader Award products can be found at <http://www.equip123.net/webarticles/anmviewer.asp?a=21&z=24>.

The EQUIP2 Communications Team hosted its first international videoconference in November on The Decentralization of Education in Africa, with participants from USAID Missions and NGOs in Ghana, Namibia, Uganda, and Washington, D.C. Also in November, EQUIP2 hosted a USAID seminar on “The Policy Implications of Education in Emergencies.” As a result of these successes, the Communications Team is working with the Decentralization and Complementary Education Steering Committees to plan several other international videoconferences for the year to come and will support a miniseries of education policy brownbags at USAID in the coming months.

Achieving EFA Goals through the Use of Cost-Effective Approaches and Alternative Models that Reach Underserved Populations

The following objectives encompass work for the Complementary Education team in 2005:

- Complete four additional case studies of large-scale complementary education programs and synthesize the findings of all case studies in a paper highlighting implications for education sector strategies, programs, and projects.
- Form partnerships with local institutions, organizations, and individuals and reinforce their capacity to carry out research and use the results of research to influence education sector policies and programs in their countries.
- Influence the emerging international consensus regarding education sector development and reform strategies so that they explicitly include opportunities for complementary models to be more fully developed and pursued.
- Identify and work with in-country partners, engaging these partners in research and use of policy tools to analyze the contributions that complementary models can make to their countries’ EFA goals and to advocate for allocation of resources for the development and expansion of complementary models.

The following is a review of accomplishments in 2005:

- The Complementary Education team of Joe DeStefano, Audrey Moore, and EQUIP2 Program Officer David Balwanz worked with EQUIP2 partner organizations CARE and International Rescue Committee (IRC) and several international and local consultants to complete the following case studies: Egypt Community Schools, Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC), Guatemala Programa Nacional de Autogestión para el Desarrollo Educativo (PRONADE), Afghanistan Home Schools and Community Organised Primary Education (COPE), Zambia Kopani Schools. The research team has decided to

complete seven case studies rather than the initially proposed four as a result of opportunities that arose as the team identified partners in each country.

- New protocols were developed and distributed to partners, which guided data collection on all the case studies. The methodology is in the process of being turned into an EQUIP2 Policy Brief.
- After long discussions with consultant Wes Snyder, it was determined that working with the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) to build on their literacy tool would allow the team to develop a rapid assessment tool to measure literacy in some of the case studies. EQUIP2 entered into negotiations and development of an acceptable scope of work with CAL. However, this activity has been put on hold in light of the fact that USAID is currently developing its own rapid literacy assessment tool.
- EQUIP2 contracted international nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and local partners to gather data and help develop six of the seven case studies currently underway. Although this method engages local partners, they require more time to complete the case studies as consultants and organizations often need additional guidance, initial drafts may not have the required information, and local partners are unable to obtain cost information.
- The Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA)'s invitation to help organize a component of its biennial meeting in Gabon in March 2006 presents a significant opportunity to address policy level issues with national policymakers. The EQUIP2 team will be present an overview of complementary education as a means to reach underserved populations in every country, including analyses of the ways complementary models manifest themselves across Africa and discussion of EQUIP2's case study results. Specific attention will be paid to some of the more promising models, where promise is defined in terms of their ability to reach underserved populations, make use of pedagogical and staffing innovations, and draw on community and non-governmental support. The team will also host a panel of policy cases from Uganda, Ethiopia and Ghana. demonstrating how government partnerships identify the role complementary education models and NGOs play in formulating and implementing sector development strategies.
- To prepare for the ADEA conference, David Balwanz identified 153 programs in sub-Saharan Africa that have several complementary education characteristics, 43 of which can be classified as and will be included in a matrix of promising models.
- The Complementary Education Steering Committee was initiated and met three times in 2005. The Steering Committee supports dissemination of papers and briefs, ADEA conference preparations, identification of consultants, and development of next steps. The CE steering committee also contributed to the development of the 2006 workplan and will review drafts of the summary paper and case studies.

Improving Educational Outcomes and Management Efficiency in the Context of Decentralization

The Decentralization Steering Committee had the following objectives for 2005:

- Apply the decentralization toolkit in different countries, revise the toolkit based on country applications, and create new modules.
- Communicate lessons learned and make resources available on key topics, including the publication of EQUIP2 Policy Briefs on such issues as school grants, accountability and data needs, school report cards, and public expenditure tracking systems.

- Develop a professional development network on education decentralization by facilitating an active dialogue among donors, host country actors, and decision-makers in multiple countries.
- Engage key policymakers currently implementing education decentralization programs.

Progress on the objectives for 2005 was the following:

- The EQUIP2 Decentralization Toolkit was applied in Egypt and Namibia. Georgia, Guatemala/Peru, and Zambia were postponed until 2006 to better fit into and respond to the national educational processes and project timetables. Two new modules were prepared and incorporated: “Understanding How the System Really Works: Reverse Process Engineering” and “Understanding How Decentralization Leads to Quality Education.”
- Policy Briefs were produced on *Public Expenditure Tracking in Education, Education Decentralization and School Grants, Increasing Accountability in Education in Paraná State, Brazil, and Information Use and Decentralized Education*. The Decentralization team also participated in the EGAT/Education conference with a workshop on decentralization and had a session on decentralization in the training course for USAID Education Officers in Hagerstown, Maryland. The international conference on education decentralization in Africa was not prioritized by the local missions and therefore not held.
- During 2005 the team had planned to create an EQUIP2 decentralization community of practice utilizing the Global Learning Portal, but technical limitations prevented the its full development and launch in the time period intended. The community of practice should be able to utilize the Portal by the mid-2006.
- Key policymakers in Ghana, Uganda, and Namibia participated in a Decentralization Videoconference. The experience gained in this encounter and its success have set the stage for building a more strategic process in 2006. The videoconference is discussed in more detail below:

On November 9, EQUIP2 hosted a USAID-supported videoconference on Decentralization of Education in Africa at the Howard University Continuing Education Center in Silver Spring, Maryland. Approximately 30 participants from three countries-Ghana, Namibia, and Uganda-were invited to discuss key issues in the design and implementation of education decentralization with 20 U.S.-based NGO and university representatives. The event was moderated by Don Winkler and Jennifer Spratt of the Research Triangle Institute (RTI) and coordinated in conjunction with the Global Development Learning Network (GDLN). Country participants included policymakers from regional and national ministries of education, project staff, education advocates and practitioners, and representatives from the three USAID missions.

The videoconference's primary objectives were to identify common goals and challenges in the region, share best practices and lessons learned, promote development of effective strategies, and facilitate access to crucial resources. Based on moderated discussions held in each country prior to the videoconference, the groups wrote and shared overviews of the status of decentralization in Ghana, Namibia, and Uganda and determined that education finance, implementation, and quality were the most important topics around which to build an ongoing dialogue. The moderators presented a brief rationale for decentralizing education and introduced each topic with examples from decentralized systems around the world. They posed specific questions to

the three countries, which grew into interesting and potentially fruitful conversations, particularly between Ghana and Uganda on the topic of implementation methods. Other topics included the formation of school management committees, teacher recruitment, balancing core funding and school fees, maximizing the impact of government intervention on implementation and quality, and building school and community capacity to enforce accountability.

The Decentralization Steering Committee began in June 2005, and met twice in the third quarter and twice during the fourth quarter of 2005. In the last meeting of the year, the Committee established priorities for the 2006. The focus will be on stimulating the discussion and dissemination of decentralization experiences, learning, research, and ideas in Africa. This will require better engaging field offices and EQUIP2 Associate Awards, USAID missions, and partner chiefs of party (COPs). Proposed activities to achieve this goal include:

- Four videoconferences with four or five countries in Africa;
- A decentralization course, workshops, and structured discussions within and across countries that link together;
- E-learning courses and use of the internet for communication, information-sharing and building a community of practice in decentralization;
- Videotaped interviews to share experiences across countries, culminating in a regional/sub-regional face-to-face meeting at the end of 2006;
- Building donor support and links to other donors around this process.

EQUIP2 will try to create incentives for participation in the proposed decentralization e-course by providing certification through a link to the World Bank Institute. The e-course and discussions will focus on such issues as:

- What the existing research says about decentralization and its effects on learning, schools, and education system performance;
- Where and why decentralization appears ineffective;
- Measurement, standards, accountability, and support - which need to be addressed in any system or context; and
- What works in centralized and decentralized systems.

The Decentralization and Complementary Education Steering Committees will collaborate to organize this process, identify projects on the ground as well as country facilitators, link the activities to a broader communication process, mobilize different actors in the region, and convening discussion groups at national and sub-regional levels. In the first quarter of 2006, the team will decide on the most appropriate mechanisms for a broad network and community of practice and the two Committees will design the 2006 e-learning course, country workshops, videoconferences and year end conference.

Improving Access and Use of Data for Effective Management of Education Strategies

John Gillies, Audrey Moore, and David Chapman began designing an M&E meta-study to conduct in 2006. The meta-evaluation will explore general theories, propositions, and/or

hypotheses for reform in the context of education policies and programs and will answer three questions:

- What were the trends in USAID and EQUIP efforts/propositions/hypotheses to strengthen and improved basic education in the developing world?
- How well did these education projects perform?
- What insights were gained from these investments that contribute to understanding how changing the conditions for reform ensure sustainability and ownership?

The desk study will examine the nature and range of mission-sponsored EQUIP2 education reform strategies and approaches, the changes in strategies, the conditions or driving forces that led to changes, and the projects' accomplishments between 2003 and 2008. Insights specific to enabling the reform environment will be gathered, as they may inform the design of future education projects.

Additional activities completed during the fourth quarter include:

- Updated completion rate analysis based on comments from USAID—this document represents the fourth draft of an approach used by USAID to look at contradictory figures;
- Revised analysis of inputs versus education outcomes in Uganda, Namibia, and Zambia—the Education Data team submitted an occasional paper for use in the USAID student fees analysis and developed templates for Malawi, Nigeria, and Egypt;
- Revised structural approach to Education and Policy Data Center (EPDC) data restructuring to allow access to more and multiple data sources for international indicators, as well as revised reporting tools to use data-mining techniques to access data in a new and more compelling fashion;
- Reviewed new sets of indicators to be used by USAID/EGAT in various courses and presentations—the review included a historical comparison of survival rates versus completion rates in support of EGAT efforts; and
- Updated DashBoard efforts to include both new indicators and software—to collect better data, the Education Data team conducted a 'town meeting' on reasonable approaches to indicator use in emerging countries.

Cross-Cutting Activities

HIV/AIDS and Teacher Absenteeism

The paper on "HIV/AIDS and Teacher Absenteeism and Attrition," written by EQUIP2 Deputy Director Stephanie Lehner in collaboration with University of Minnesota Ph.D. Brynja Gudjonsson, was finalized and circulated for peer review. The paper is being prepared for dissemination via the EQUIP2 website with links to related papers and the websites of other key stakeholders.

Organizational Development and Donor Effectiveness

John Gillies, David Plank, David Chapman, Tom Lent, and EQUIP2 Program Officer Jessica Jester Quijada reviewed and finalized the donor effectiveness activity research agenda during the

fourth quarter. “Opportunities to Learn” has emerged as a key research issue to support policy reform recommendations. The team will produce initial drafts of the research in early 2006.

Jessica Jester Quijada worked with David Chapman, EQUIP2 CTO Patrick Collins, and the USAID Development Experience Clearinghouse (DEC) to continue the preparatory work for the meta-analysis of USAID education projects. She requested hundreds of project reports documenting basic education projects funded through the late 1990s. Ongoing work will identify additional relevant documents associated with projects initiated after the mid-1990s, as these were more difficult to identify according to DEC classifications. All of the documents will be reviewed in April and May 2006.

School Fees

Activities on the school fees research began in earnest during the fourth quarter. Following a meeting with Patrick Collins at the USAID training, which briefed the team on the status of the issues in Congress and within USAID, David Chapman, David Plank, and Luis Crouch began to conduct research. David Plank provided leadership to the School Fees team, attending meetings at USAID, The World Bank, and with other donors to understand the spectrum of perspectives on school fees. He developed talking points for USAID, along with a draft policy paper and framework for viewing the issue. He will continue to provide leadership to the school fees activity in 2006.

Obstacles and Proposed Solutions

EQUIP2 contracted international NGOs and local partners to gather data and help develop some of the case studies currently underway. Although this method engages local partners, they require more time to complete the case studies as consultants and organizations often need additional guidance, initial drafts may not have the required information, and local partners are unable to obtain cost information.

A significant challenge continues to be cost-share, and the criteria applied to appropriate cost-share activities. The continuing dialogue with the EQUIP CTOs and project directors is working to clarify the criteria in operational terms. However, the nature of the acceptable activities requires lengthy negotiations with outside partners and, in some cases, these discussions lead nowhere because the activities are not seen as key for USAID or, in some cases, because the partner is unable to commit. This will continue to be on the top of the Project Director’s agenda.

Financial Summary

Type of Expenditure	Current Quarter Expenditures	Total Expended	Obligated Balance Remaining
Core Funding	290,592	3,089,448	1,842,230
Federal Share	277,722	3,017,308	1,271,108
Recipient Share	12,870	72,140	571,122
Total Cost Share %	4.4%	2.3%	31%

III. Associate Awards: Activities and Accomplishments, October to December 2005

Summary: EQUIP2 did not respond to any Associate Award requests in the fourth quarter of 2005. The Southern Sudan Technical Support project was signed in October 2005 and the project team fielded Tom Balderston as Senior Technical Advisor to Southern Sudan. The El Salvador project was also signed in October and the COP was selected in November. The main focus of this project is to increase and improve social sector investments and transparency in education and improve basic education opportunities.

Existing Associate Awards

Education Policy and Data Center (EPDC)

EPDC fulfilled several key objectives during the fourth quarter. The team continued to collect new data from household surveys and administrative websites. Looking towards the future, EPDC hired the Redwood Company to evaluate the existing data system. Redwood's report made several recommendations on restructuring the database, improving the database presentation and retrieval system, report production, and the website. With Redwood's continued assistance, restructured systems are scheduled for launch in March 2006.

EPDC also achieved many policy and analysis goals during the fourth quarter. On October 25, the team presented the report "Educating the World's Children: Patterns of Growth and Inequality" to the Council on Foreign Relations. In addition to receiving positive feedback at the presentation, the team was presented with the AED Leadership Award. As part of a partnership between EPDC and the Enabling HIV/AIDS+TB and Social Sector Environment (ENHANSE) Project, a team member traveled to Nigeria to introduce the projections model to the team and to collect data to be used in projections. EPDC is a partner in the development of an online training course for education managers, and one team member traveled to Kenya on a planning and needs assessment mission. The team initiated planning and research to produce six policy briefs, expand the projections methodology, and produce an education quality toolkit.

Egypt Basic Education Program (ERP)

During the fourth quarter, ERP provided continued assistance to capacity building in the Central and Governorate Offices of the Ministry of Education (MOE). At the Central level, ERP continued to collaborate with working groups that build the capacity of national offices to more fully understand the nature of the reform process.

Efforts to promote systemic change saw further decentralization, education strategic planning at the governorate level, the strengthening of core working groups within the MOE, progress with the MOE's exam reform, and extensive, substantive coordination among donors in the areas of standards and board of trustee (BOT) development.

One encouraging development has been observed in both standards and community participation/decentralization. Donors supporting MOE education reform efforts at the primary school level have come together to compare notes. The plan is to coordinate the use of tools,

measurements, and materials. Two task forces have been formed. The Standards MOE/Donors Working Group is producing a short report card on the effective school, community participation, school management, and teacher performance for simplified self-assessment on standards compliance. The MOE's BOT decree last fall led donors to take similar steps to collaborate in support of BOT development. A donor group has met and will suggest a common strategy and shared methods and materials in support of MOE initiatives on BOT training and implementation. ERP has played a key role in using donor collaboration to leverage the development of MOE capacity to promote both standards and decentralization.

Full-scale operations on the part of ERP's many components saw broad engagement of civil society organizations in planning and supporting school-based and community-based education: significant numbers of learners enrolled in and graduating from ERP-assisted education programs; continued training of a large cohort of teachers and administrators; the ongoing development of a standards-based, demand-driven professional development system; the initiation of a local planning process in governorates; the strengthening of university faculty of education liaisons with the Family of Schools; the continued conversion of the Adult Education Authority into a client-responsive education system; the development of a community-base to execute and deliver girls scholarships; and the completion of innovative architectural and engineering designs for the first seven of 17 schools.

Georgia General Education Decentralization and Accreditation (GEDA)

During the fourth quarter, field activities accelerated under the GEDA project. The project initiated its second phase, focusing on implementation, at the end of October and planning for decentralization and accreditation activities progressed in close collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Science (MES) and USAID.

The Strategy Team leader, Wes Snyder, was nominated and approved as COP and assumed this post upon his return to Georgia in December. While he prepared for the long-term residence position, AED's home office Project Director Jerry Wood served as interim COP. USAID approved the nominations of Dori Nielson and Howard Williams, who will serve as Regional Advisors for the west and the east, respectively. Five host-country nationals were hired to support the operation of the central office in Tbilisi, including the Project Manager, Procurement and Administrative manager, Finance Manager, a translator, and an architect.

Additionally, five consultants traveled to Georgia to support both the decentralization and accreditation initiatives. In October, Michael Axmann was fielded in support of vocational education. He met with various stakeholders to assess the needs of the sector and make recommendations on potential activities for the GEDA project. Jerry Wood arrived at the end of October to serve as interim director and coordinator of all field activities until Wes Snyder's return. In November, AED's home office Finance Manager Doug Boudreau conducted training for new field office staff on AED and USAID regulatory finance and accounting practices. Dori Nielson returned to Georgia to draft functional statements and position descriptions for the Educational Resource Centers (ERCs), particularly for the western region. Howard Williams facilitated the process of ERC site identification and functional development for the eastern region and examined legal and logistical issues of property transfer. Tom Welsh worked with a special Georgian task force to develop clear linkages for the ERCs to the central MES and the

local governing bodies. In December, Dr. Lezberg supported accreditation activities by assisting the MES to further articulate the role of the future State Accreditation System (SAS), including determining staff qualifications and functions, outlining operating policies and procedures, and establishing the relationships between the SAS and the institutions and programs it will ultimately accredit.

Accreditation and quality assurance workshops, led by consultant Amy Lezberg, were held for universities in Batumi, Kutaisi, and Tbilisi in December with over 100 people in attendance. The purpose of these workshops was to better articulate the mission and objectives of the institutions in Georgia and to move the accreditation process from quantity assurance activities (i.e., essentially input-focused) to quality assurance requirements.

Roles, responsibilities, and functional linkages of the ERCs were determined and articulated by a task group facilitated by Thomas Welsh and composed of MES representatives from the Regional Coordination Department, Human Resources Management, State Accreditation Service, and the Ilya Chachavadze Project financed by The World Bank. Tentative sites for ERC development have been identified in the Adjara Region, Guria, Telavi, Tbilisi, and Kutaisi. Refurbishment will begin on these sites once the necessary documentation for the transference of potential ERC buildings to the MES is complete.

Ghana Basic Education Comprehensive Assessment System (BECAS)

During the fourth quarter, BECAS focused on completing post-National Education Assessment (NEA) administration activities, such as completion of scanning and scoring the NEA answer sheets, analysis of results, and report writing. The NEA answer sheets were collected, organized by region, class, and subject, and scanned. Senior Technical Advisor Wes Snyder joined the BECAS team in November to assist in the analysis of results and orient Kafui Etsey and Francis Amedahe to the process of analyzing the test results. Analysis of the test results continued through the end of the quarter. The results of the NEA exam are currently being written by BECAS Operations Coordinator John Adu and will be distributed in the first quarter of 2006.

Consultants from the University of Montana spent two weeks working with BECAS and ASU staff to develop further capacity in the areas of item banking, continuous assessment and item and data analysis. ASU members were asked to participate in the training activities with each of the consultants. However, their work schedules prevented their participation in most of the training. During the quarter, the BECAS management team also participated in meetings with members for the USAID Education Office, as well as with representatives from CRDD, Ghana Education Service (GES) and the MOE. The focus of the meetings was to discuss sustainability of testing in the GES.

Guatemala Social Investment and Policy Dialogue (SIPD)

During the fourth quarter, the SIPD established informed dialogue forums with members of nine key target groups for education investment, helped to strengthen the institutional capacity of MINEDUC through high-level training in process models, produced several education research studies on returns on education investment, defined the social communications strategy, and launched the publicity campaign, which seeks to increase elementary school retention rates.

The Guatemala team also negotiated six sub-agreements with Empresarios por la Educación/CNP, ASIES, CNPRE, FLACSO, PRODESSA, and ICEF. Additionally, under the cross-cutting grant program, the project will collaborate with MINEDUC to finance a national seminar called The Harvest of Dreams that will bring together approximately 2,000 youth from 24 departments of Guatemala. The goal of the seminar is to allow youth to exchange information and experiences acquired during the Path of Dreams project. A meeting with all the partners was held on November 30. Partners expressed their satisfaction with the invitation to participate in a common effort, supported the project's vision and the need to work beyond the current government's administration, supported the idea of defining a political strategy for advocacy work, and agreed upon a timeline for submission of the final versions of their sub-agreements before the end of the second quarter of 2006.

In terms of collaborating with the health sector, the working relationship with the PHR+ group was successfully reestablished. It was agreed that monthly meetings will be held in order to better coordinate the joint efforts between the health and education offices, specifically the coordination of activities that will be directed towards the advocacy of financing education and health in Congress (i.e., commissions of education and health), technical and directive officials of the MOE, the Ministry of Health, and the Ministry of Finance. This activity will utilize information from the "Analysis of Interested Parties in the Millennium Goals," a USAID-funded study in which PHR+ and EQUIP2 participated.

Honduras Improving Student Achievement Project (MIDEH)

During the fourth quarter, MIDEH completed curriculum-based standards for mathematics and Spanish language for first through sixth grades and is in the process of validating the standards, which will begin in 2006. For the launch of the 2006 school year, a total of 40,000 teachers will receive training in the use of the standards. An integrated set of materials, including planning tools, monthly process test for students, and guides for grading the tests and using them to gain a quantitative and qualitative measure of student progress has been developed to assist teachers in applying the standards. During the fourth quarter of 2005, the project developed modules and training to support teachers in identifying and teaching students with learning challenges and completed an assessment of the Educadores alternative delivery education program for first through ninth grades. The project launched a series of local town hall meetings with civil society groups to facilitate public/private dialogue and consensus-building in support of the attainment of EFA-Fast Track Initiative (FTI) goals and the implementation of standards-based learning.

Jordan ERfKE Support Project

The following activities were completed in Jordan during the fourth quarter of 2005.

Component 1: Early Childhood Education

ESP/ECE assisted the MOE in development of a supervisor training manual that includes nine in-depth topics covering training objectives, training process and training needs, amongst other topics. ESP/ECE staff also produced a kindergarten teacher training manual and supporting DVDs. The team trained 282 Ministry of Education kindergarten teachers on five key early childhood topics using the manual. The training took place throughout the Kingdom.

Refurbishment of the kindergartens is proceeding on schedule. At the end of 2005, 28 kindergartens had been renovated, one Children's Language Enrichment Centre (CLEC) established, and an additional 15 kindergartens and four CLECs in the Jerash and Ajloun area were nearing completion. By end of January, engineering assessment and bidding documents for 20 additional KGs and three CLECs in the Balqa and Irbid areas will be completed and put out for bid.

ESP consultants Drs. Wood and Spier designed and implemented Phase II of the national curriculum evaluation activity, including an assessment of 28 kindergartens upgraded by ESP. ESP and MOE organized a national curriculum workshop in December that was opened by the Secretary General of MOE, during which the findings of the curriculum evaluation report were presented by the consultants. The outcome of the workshop is the basis for improving the national kindergarten curriculum.

Work proceeded on the Kindergarten Accreditation Framework with the completion of the first draft of the learning outcomes and indicators. The document identified nine areas of kindergarten children's learning: language (i.e., Arabic and English), mathematics, science, health and wellness, information and communication technology (ICT), religion, life skills, creative thinking, and social studies. This document was also presented at the curriculum evaluation national workshop.

Parent/Community Participation was one of the topics presented at the advanced kindergarten teacher training program. ECE prepared a strategy paper focusing on parent involvement in kindergarten children's education and development. ESP/ECE provided training to kindergarten teachers in December on the importance of parental involvement. Teachers were also provided with ways to promote and encourage this involvement through school and classrooms functions. As part of this initiative, the ESP/ECE Director accompanied the MOE/ECD Director and one MOE staff member on a U.S. study tour in November to visit family literacy centers in Washington, D.C. and Los Angeles, California focusing on different ways to reach out to parents in children's education.

ECE initiated two formative studies in M&E. The Early Years Evaluation (EYE) instrument was used in both. The first study intended to validate the instrument for use with kindergarten-aged children. Accordingly, a sample of 100 kindergarten children was tested. The second study had a sample of 230 first grade children. The children were clustered into groups by ESP/kindergarten experience, MOE/kindergarten experience, and no kindergarten experience. The goal of this study was to compare the achievement of the three groups as they complete first grade.

Component 2: Youth Technology and Careers (YTC)

The YTC team finalized the teacher's guides manual as an outcome of the teacher's guide training workshop for the Management Information Stream (MIS) teachers. This teacher's guide is now being used by the curriculum department as the template for all subjects. A contract was signed with JAID Productions for student MIS Online electronic content development that integrates learning for all six MIS curricula. Agreement was reached on a memorandum of

understanding defining the relationship between JAID, MOE, and ESP during development of the modules.

Following the YTC Training of Trainers workshop for MIS teachers and supervisors in September, the YTC team supported training workshops carried out by the core team of MOE MIS trainers for 650 MIS teachers in 16 training centers that covered instructional and assessment strategies in November and December. YTC staff evaluated the training workshops for MIS teachers in conjunction with the MOE and assessed possible changes to ensure the training was correctly targeting teacher needs and issues. The YTC team also conducted surveys of 16 MIS training sites and MIS school infrastructure, teacher training needs, and student needs in preparation as part of capacity building in 2006.

The ESP/STC Team assisted MOE in preparing for the School-to-Career (STC) booth at the Injaz Job Fair in November. The fair was attended by thousands of young Jordanians and the booth was very popular. The STC team, in cooperation with the MOE and STC stakeholders and school educators and counselors, developed the first draft of the STC idea book in Arabic and English. The book will be reviewed by a special committee at the MOE for its final production.

Three companies have been contracted to contribute to the media campaign for STC. They are being coordinated through the media consultant hired by the STC team. Various materials have been completed or are in development to support the program. These materials were on display at the Injaz job fair. The development of the media materials has been achieved with strong commitment from the MOE, who selected the final design for the campaign logo and the various publicity materials that will be available. ESP/STC is assisting MOE in establishing links with partners and the transfer of experience and knowledge to MOE staff. ESP/STC is also working to develop STC capacity within the MOE. In collaboration with MOE, the ESP/STC has planned a number of workshops in the coming year to promote the STC message and enhance the programs development. MOE and ESP/STC has signed a number of memoranda of understanding with stakeholders and is working closely with all players in this field.

ESP/YTC staff conducted four three-day "Introducing Technology into Classroom" Computer-on-Wheels (COW) workshops in Karak, Irbid, Amman, and Salt in October and November. The workshops included both principals and teachers. The participants were introduced to the COW concept and given the opportunity to become more familiar with COW operation and administration systems and COW management. Participants had the opportunity to apply three lessons using Netsupport School software. Four COW carts were delivered to schools during the period mirroring training session location.

The procurement of equipment—300 laptops and projectors—for discovery schools was completed.

A contract was signed with CADER to implement the "Training in the Use of Innovative Technology in the Classroom" in five pilot schools.

Malawi Education Sector Policy, Planning, EMIS Support Activities and Higher Education Strategic Plan Development

During the fourth quarter, USAID approved AED's request to extend support to an Education Management Information System (EMIS) activity in Malawi through December 31, 2006. The additional time will ensure that this effort, which has only two full cycles of operation, can be continued. The goal is to ensure that not only can 2006 school census data be released on an accelerated timetable, but that the entire EMIS process becomes institutionalized to the maximum extent possible within the MOE.

Fahim Akbar will continue on as the Senior EMIS Technical Specialist guiding the project and ensuring the conduct of the following activities as part of his residence in Malawi:

- Creation of a 2006 Annual EMIS Workplan in conjunction with the MOE. It is expected that this document will serve as a guide for the MOE in allocating staff, providing additional financial resources, and organizing its presentation and work schedule to support EMIS.
- Oversee the development of a revised 2006 Annual School Census for Primary and Secondary Schools. It is the intention, for this year of work, that the instruments will be locked in for at least three years in order to establish a solid, longitudinal basis for impact assessment.
- Oversee the conduct of head office, headmaster, and district training.
- Coordinate the MOE teams conducting the actual census exercise.
- Make necessary local adjustments, in concert with the database administrator, to the existing Malawi software.
- Coordinate the production of three local documents:
 - Revised ED*ASSIST Users Manual
 - Revised ED*ASSIST Technical Manual
 - Revised Step-by-Step work schedule to be used in subsequent years
- Oversee the data gathering as needed.
- Coordinate the data capture with the MOE personnel in-training.
- Coordinate the data cleaning and imputing for missing school with the MOE personnel ultimately assigned to the task.
- Liaise with multiple stakeholders to ensure that needed core reports are being produced.
- Coordinate the necessary report production for the education statistics 2005 and any selected district, zone, or school subsets.
- Oversee the release of an installation CD making the school level data available to all stakeholders requesting it.
- Set the parameters for the 2007 data cycle, including the needed staffing, resources, and timetable.
- Providing a development plan for EMIS for 2007 and beyond.

Mali Regional Action Plan/Decision Making Project (RAP-DMP)

Not available at this time

Namibia Basic Education Support, Phase 3 (BES 3)

During the fourth quarter, accomplishments under BES 3 included the following activities:

- Leading a series of workshops for community-based volunteers and school committees in Kavango and Caprivi regions tasked with developing small grants proposals for school projects that would provide support for orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) to remain and succeed in school. By the end of the quarter, each small grant regional committee met and reviewed the proposals. A total of 28 projects were recommended for funding. Together, these projects would support over 4,000 OVC.
- The year four learner performance assessment tool was implemented in a representative sample of schools. Results from the tests were collected and analyzed to generate a baseline of achievement in language, math, and science. The full technical report was presented to USAID, MOE partners, and regional education officers in a conference in November.
- The second series of Writing for Kids books, which presents HIV/AIDS issues in stories appropriate for primary-aged children, was edited and translated. The series is now ready for illustrating and publishing.
- The in-service professional development program continued with site-based teacher professional development workshops and cluster and circuit workshops focused on improving first through seventh grade language, math, and science instruction. Site-based training for parents and school board members on school development planning across each target region began.
- BES 3 drew together a group of key stakeholders in the MOE and regional education officers to participate in an EQUIP2 international videoconference on education decentralization. The videoconference was facilitated by Don Winkler and Jenny Sprat as part of the EQUIP2 Leader work on decentralization, and included participants from Ghana and Uganda.
- The BES3 team facilitated a planning meeting with key partners from the Namibian Institute for Educational Development (NIED) and the teacher training colleges in Namibia to plan the second year of activities in the pre-service program of teacher educator professional development.

Children's Learning Access Sustained in Senegal (CLASS) and Senegal's Improved Teacher Training Program (SITT)

In early October, CLASS and SITT held its semi-annual steering committee meeting, which was chaired by the Minister of Education and attended by Beverly Jones and Ken Rhodes of AED. The Minister and the committee members—representing the Prime Minister's office, several Ministries, teachers' unions, etc.—congratulated project staff and partners and approved the project's workplan for Year 3. The Minister spoke about the “silent revolution” the project was supporting, getting local communities to accept shared responsibility and ownership of rural schools, and described the project as the best education project in Senegal since independence.

Construction and renovation began at the last four of 30 schools and will be completed in March 2006. School furniture was delivered to 18 of 30 schools and plans were made to purchase computer and electronic equipment for the schools that currently have electricity. Student enrollment, including enrollment of girls, is high at all of the project-supported schools.

In December, 250 high school students, all girls from economically disadvantaged families, received scholarships funded through a partnership between USAID and the SONATEL Foundation and set up by one of the phone companies. These scholarships include funds to help offset school-related costs, participation in training and mentoring programs, and school supplies and books.

Throughout the quarter, project staff and ministry teams worked to review the results of teacher and principal training provided to over 500 in September 2005. Three modules of training materials were revised and departmental trainers received refresher training to prepare them to reach another 500 teachers and principals in January 2006. Plans were also made for a three-pronged strategy of questionnaires, focus group discussions, and classroom and school observations to assess the impact of the training. This monitoring effort will begin in February 2006.

In partnership with Microsoft, the project provided 15 school teams (i.e., principals, teachers, and students) with an introductory course on using computers. These schools will receive computers in 2006.

During the fourth quarter, the development of four training modules for the members of school management councils continued. Two modules were completed and departmental trainers were trained. The first ever training of all SMC councils in 30 schools will begin in January 2006 and will continue in twice-a-month sessions of several days through March 2006.

Uganda Support for Education Management Information System (EMIS)

On November 30, 2005, the Uganda EMIS project came to a close. Fourth quarter activities included:

- Circulation of the DEOs workshop report;
- Assistance to the MOE to create the 2005 EMIS rollout CDs based on sealed databases for primary and secondary 2005;
- Delivery of the final version of the GIS application with the added functionality to automatically upload the EMIS data for future years;
- Printing of GIS maps for ministers of Parliament;
- Report on the Linkage System—UNEB linkage to EMIS and the GIS application; and
- Update of the ED*ASSIST Users Manual to include:
 - School attendance system;
 - The three new indicators: survival rates, P7 completion rates, and PLE exams performance index; and
 - Summary of design plans to improve the EMIS users interface.

Zambia: Improving Information and Strengthening Policy Implementation

Major fourth quarter achievements in Zambia:

- EQUIP2 staff provided substantial input in the development of financial projections for the National Development Plan, which was completed during this quarter.
- The MOE Permanent Secretary officiated over the World AIDS Day workshop organized by the Ministry. The workshop satisfied the project objective to bring the HIV/AIDS message, counseling, and testing services to as many MOE employees as possible.
- The MOE began financial contributions to the HIV/AIDS Workplace program workshops marking a considerable change in MOE strategy and partnership in this program.
- Pre-pilot tests were pre-tested, and the resulting data was used to compile pre-pilot test papers in English, mathematics, social and development studies, integrated science, creative and technology studies, and community studies. The test papers are currently being printed in preparation for baseline testing in January 2006.
- An initial distribution of 2005 school census data was released on CD and distributed to all provinces and districts.
- EQUIP2 funds ensured that initial copies of the 2004 Educational Statistical Bulletin were distributed at the joint annual review meeting hosted by the MOE.

New Associate Awards

El Salvador

Not available at this time

South Sudan Technical Support Project

The USAID-funded Technical Assistance to the Sudan SoE project officially began on September 1, 2005. AED is collaboratively implementing the project with the American Institutes for Research (AIR) and the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MEST).

Tom Balderston, AED's long-term Senior Education Advisor, departed for Nairobi and South Sudan on October 2, 2005, where he began meeting with USAID, members of MEST, and other stakeholders, including members of the SBEP program and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) representatives. The project also deployed the first team of short-term consultants composed of Joan Sullivan-Owomoyela and Mark Lynd to work on creating a workplan and a performance monitoring plan and schedule future consultant work.

Some of the major challenges the project faced this quarter included the absence of a minister and undersecretary in the MEST. Sudan's Government of National Unity was only formed in September 2005 and, with a minister of education yet to be named, it has been difficult for the project to provide technical assistance to the MEST and work collaboratively with key stakeholders. Another challenge was the resignation of the long-term senior education advisor. AED has been actively searching for his replacement and expects to field this person by mid-February 2006.

Given the challenges described above that led to a slow start and delays in program implementation, AED has requested a no-cost extension until May 30, 2006. The project is also planning on submitting to USAID a request for a one year contract extension through February 2007.

Anticipated Associate Awards

- Nigeria