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Educational Quality Improvement Program  
Policy ▪ Systems ▪ Management

## Quarterly Report January to March, 2006



Submitted by:

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## **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, January - March 2006**

The quarter ending March 31, 2006 includes work done in January, February, and March 2006. During this period, EQUIP2 emphasized completion of the 2006 workplan and initiation/continuation of activities in the areas of complementary education, decentralization, donor effectiveness, evaluation, and school fees. Cost share planning and activities continued to move forward as the agenda for the private-public partnership conference was finalized. Additionally, the plans for the Youth Employment conference, hosted by the Qatar Foundation, moved forward as EQUIP2 associate award teams began to develop policy papers on youth activities for presentation at the conference. Other high visibility activities included a presentation by the Complementary education at the ADEA Biennial conference; presentation of a school fees framework at a conference in Beijing; and the completion of 12 new communication products, including case studies, policy briefs, and issues papers. No new Associate Awards were received this quarter; however, three Associate Awards received notice of impending budget cuts.

#### **Specific Activities this Quarter**

##### ***Program Management***

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

- EQUIP2 Project Director and Deputy John Gillies and Audrey Moore attended cognizant technical officer (CTO) meetings in January and February. Project Directors shared their

respective workplans with the CTOs, discussing activities such as communications training for associate awards to be held in South Africa by EQUIP1, the video-conference series on decentralization to be hosted by EQUIP2, and the EQUIP3 budgetary impacts. The meetings also concentrated on cost share strategies, which were presented by both EQUIP1 and 2. Cost share strategies ranged from discussions of valuing best efforts to conferences focused on youth employment (hosted by the Qatar Foundation) and public-private partnerships (hosted by The AED Conference Board). Specific cost share strategies for EQUIP2 are discussed in the next section.

- Detailed operational, costed workplans and cost-share proposals were developed for each partner and program component, and adjusted as needed as the estimated obligation schedule became available.
- EQUIP2 held its annual team retreat on January 22, 2006. The objective of the retreat was to review the workplan in light of staffing changes and discuss how to improve efficiency, distribute workloads, and determine areas of need for assistance.
- Several associate awards experienced budget reductions this past quarter that engaged the EQUIP2 team in reprogramming. The EQUIP2 Mali Associate award experienced an initial 15-20% cut, with on-going and unexpected additional cuts in process. The GEDA project in Georgia experienced a 25% reduction in budget, leading to a significant rescoping of the project.
- Tom Lent, Deputy Director of Associate Awards traveled to both Zambia and Guatemala this quarter to work with the teams on workplan development, teambuilding and relationship building with the Ministries. A decision was made to replace the COP in Guatemala in March. Felix Alvarado will serve as interim COP until a new COP can be hired.
- Stephanie Lehner and Laurie Cameron finalized revisions to the Patterns database and completed data-entry for the new Associate awards. The 2006 Patterns report will be finalized in May.

### ***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. 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 eight 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 continued to move forward as meetings were held with the Qatar Foundation to secure core funding and logistics support. AED/EQUIP2 Associate awards began to prepare papers on activities related to youth employment, which will be finalized for presentation in Qatar.
- AED and EQUIP2 continued to work with the AED 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. John Gillies was asked to plan and deliver an additional

workshop on how to develop public private partnerships, which will be held the day following the main conference.

### ***EQUIP2 Communications***

During the first quarter of Project Year 2006, the EQUIP2 Communications Team focused on finalizing new Leader Award products. EQUIP2 published 12 new products in print and online, including:

- Policy Brief: *Towards Effective, Decentralized Classroom Reform*
- Working Paper: *From Policy to Practice: The Teacher's Role in Policy Implementation in Namibia*
- Case Study: *Meeting EFA: Egypt Community Schools*
- Case Study: *Meeting EFA: Ghana School for Life*
- Case Study: *Meeting EFA: Honduras Educadores*
- Case Study: *Meeting EFA: Mali Community Schools*,
- Case Study: *Meeting EFA: Zambia Community Schools*
- Issues Brief: *Are School Report Cards Effective?*
- Working Paper: *School Report Cards: Some Recent Experiences*
- Policy Brief: *Does Stakeholder Collaboration Improve Education Quality*
- Working Paper: *Stakeholder Collaboration: An Imperative for Education Quality*
- Policy Brief: *Why Gender Equity in Education Reform?*

The full list of EQUIP2 Leader Award products can be found at <http://www.equip123.net/webarticles/anmviewer.asp?a=21&z=24>. All new EQUIP2 publications are submitted to the Development Experience Clearinghouse in compliance with USAID accessibility and marking requirements.

From January to March 2006, the EQUIP website accumulated its highest quarterly total of hits at 615,851, including a monthly record of approximately 214,766 in March; its highest quarterly total for visits at approximately 68,722, including a monthly record of 25,425 in March; and its highest quarterly total of unique visitors at approximately 28,414, including a monthly record of 10,595 in March. The EQUIP2 portion of the website is located at [http://www.equip123.net/equip2/index\\_new.html](http://www.equip123.net/equip2/index_new.html).

In February, the EQUIP2 Communications Team worked with the Complementary Education Steering Committee to develop a strategic plan for communications and dissemination. As part of the communications strategy, EQUIP2 presented the findings from eight case studies at the Association for the Development of Education in Africa Biennial conference in Libreville, Gabon, and distributed the Complementary Education policy briefs to ADEA participants. The February/March issue of the *EQ Review* also focused on EQUIP2's complementary education work and case studies, and the first entry in the 2006 EQUIP2 Education Decentralization in Africa videoconference series will include a module on reaching the underserved to be developed by the Complementary Education Steering Committee.

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

Through year three of the project the complementary education research has focused on identifying and documenting the impact and cost effectiveness of complementary models for providing education. With nine case studies and a synthesis paper completed, objectives for 2006 include:

- Using findings from the case studies to influence the policies and education sector plans of developing country governments, most notably the members of the ADEA;
- Using findings from the case studies to influence the education policies and programs of international development agencies and non-governmental organizations (e.g. USAID, the World Bank, UNICEF, CARE, Save the Children, etc.);
- Deepening our understanding of three critical components of complementary education models with an eye towards understanding how complementary models become features of the formal education system:
  - The structure, operation and supports required for effective local governance of schools;
  - The mechanisms for allocating resources to community-based, complementary schools and for generating local resources;
  - The characteristics, training and support required for effective use of locally recruited teachers.
- Developing a tool kit based on the research that will improve the work of agencies, organizations and Ministries supporting complementary models, in particular in the areas of assessment of student learning, data collection and analysis, and monitoring and evaluation;
- Developing a graphic representation of the impact of complementary models on the educational attainment of underserved areas and populations in developing countries.

### Accomplishments to Date:

- Eight case studies (Egypt, Mali, Ghana, Honduras, Zambia, Afghanistan COPE, Afghanistan HBS, and BRAC) were completed and readied for publishing.
- A summary paper based on the eight case studies was completed and submitted to ADEA.
- The complementary education team worked with representatives of complementary models in Uganda, Ethiopia, and Ghana to prepare summary panel presentations for ADEA. The purpose of the panel was to demonstrate how complementary models worked with government officials to leverage support for complementary models.
- Joe DeStefano and Audrey Moore traveled to Libreville, Gabon to represent EQUIP2 at the ADEA Biennial Conference, March 27-31, 2006. Results of our participation in the conference included:
  - The opening plenary presentation on the theme of “Effective Schools” made by Adrian Verspoor on behalf of the ADEA Secretariat included reference to complementary education approaches and the lessons they hold for more effective

- delivery of education. This presentation served to frame many of the discussions during the week in the *Effective Schools* track of the conference
- The EQUIP2 presentation was successfully delivered on Thursday, March 30<sup>th</sup> to an audience of approximately 155 people. Included in the audiences were Nicholas Brunett (UNESCO), Mark Bray (IIP), and Catherine Miles (USAID).
  - The EQUIP2 Complementary Education summary paper prepared for the ADEA biennial was distributed in English and French and English versions only of the EQUIP2 Complementary Education issues and policy briefs and case studies were also distributed.
  - The summary of the Effective Schools theme of the conference included reference to the findings of the EQUIP2 Complementary Education research, indicating broad acceptance of the notion that complementary education approaches hold lessons for formal public systems. In addition, the concluding findings of the Effective Schools theme also emphasized the necessity of having a variety of approaches for delivering education in order to more effectively reach underserved populations and to increase the overall effectiveness of education in Africa (note that these ideas came from funding agency and/or ministry personnel).
  - Several follow-up conversations with Nick Brunette (UNESCO), Mark Bray (IIEP), and Education Ministers suggested areas of future collaboration in school fees, financing of complementary models, and design and implementation toolkits.
- Joe DeStefano began to develop a training module related to local governance and management for inclusion in the decentralization video-conference series. These videoconferences will engage key policymakers from several countries in the process of implementing education decentralization programs to share the key issues they are facing in the decentralization process. Materials and questions within the module will guide the discussions to assist the teams to better understand the role of local governance and additional research from the complementary education program experience of establishing effective structures for local governance will be drawn on to animate these discussions. The first video conference is expected to take place in July 2006.
  - The complementary education team met with the EQUIP2 communications team to develop a dissemination strategy for 2006. Elements of the strategy will include such things as publication of articles in academic journals, publication in various newsletters and internal agency/NGO documents, presentations at conferences, offering seminars, workshops and/or brown bags. This communication strategy will guide how the tools developed and will be tailored to different audiences.
  - A copy of the Complementary Education Synthesis article will be published next quarter in the special issue of the Journal of International Cooperation in Education, edited by David Chapman.

### ***Improving Educational Outcomes and Management Efficiency in the Context of Decentralization***

The objective of this program area is to improve the design and implementation of education decentralization programs to improve educational outcomes. For the remaining period of EQUIP2, this objective will be achieved through a) development of an international community of practice to share experience with decentralization strategies and practices; and b) engagement

with the national policymakers and the donor community to improve project design and identification of appropriate indicators of success. The following objectives will be the focus of the decentralization work in 2006:

- Foster an African community of practice and disseminate lessons learned in education decentralization by collaborating with the World Bank and DFID to:
  - Produce distance learning materials to be distributed to education officers at various levels of government, as well as representatives of USAID and other donor agencies;
  - Coordinate and sponsor a series of videoconferences to engage key policymakers the process of implementing education decentralization programs;
  - Sponsor a conference on Education Decentralization in Africa.
- Apply the decentralization workshop toolkit to associate award countries and other venues as possible.
- Disseminate lessons learned in the form of policy briefs on decentralization and quality of schooling and education finance, as well as country briefs on selected decentralization cases.

#### Achievements to Date

- Don Winkler, Tom Lent, Joe DeStefano, and Audrey Moore met in January to discuss the possibility of including the complementary education research in the video conference series. It was agreed that Joe DeStefano would develop a training module on local governance and management using the research findings from the existing case study research. This module is currently under development and will be launched in July 2006.
- Don Winkler continued collaborative work with the World Bank Institute to develop an additional three modules on education finance, decentralization and quality of education, and accountability. These modules will be finalized next quarter and launched in the third quarter of 2006.
- Don Winkler completed the first draft of a policy brief on the impact of decentralization on education quality. The policy brief is under review and will be finalized in the coming quarter.

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

As USAID and EQUIP2 research interests have changed in the past year, some aspects of the original objectives have been either taken over by EPDC, with which EQUIP2 coordinates, or reformulated to better meet EQUIP2 objectives for the coming two years. The main objective of this program area for the next two years will be to establish effective mechanisms to improve access to reliable data, information, and knowledge for USAID and EQUIP program managers and national education officials.

Research under this program area will focus on four main activities:

- Meta-evaluation of USAID investment in education from 1995 to 2005.
- Meta-evaluation of EQUIP projects to date, using same methodology.
- Update the Trends in USAID/EQUIP2 LWA investments study for the third program year.

- Complete pending work on the learning outcomes benchmarking and explore the development of an early literacy activity.

### Achievements to Date

- Jessica Quijada collaborated with Patrick Collins to gather documents from USAID projects spanning 1995-2005. Approximately 500 documents have been gathered to date. These documents will be reviewed in April with Dr. David Chapman during the initial phase of the meta-evaluation.
- Audrey Moore and Sala Ba began to collect documents from the EQUIP2 project for the meta-evaluation of EQUIP2 Associate Awards. The EQUIP2 M&E team will be reviewing these documents and applying a general evaluation framework to understand the types of indicators being collected, the level of evaluation (i.e. formative, impact, institutional, policy) being utilized by projects, and drawing lessons learned that link to the USAID meta-evaluation outcomes.
- Stephanie Lehner and Jessica Quijada continued to analyze data on the associate award activities and approaches for the 2006 Patterns analysis. The Patterns report will be completed and disseminated in May.
- The Learning Benchmark study neared completion this quarter. The report, currently being written by Maria Stephens at AIR, will present learning assessment data for 24 countries. This report will be finalized in the following quarter.

### *Cross-Cutting Activities*

#### Revision of the ERS Documents

The EQUIP2 Leader Award activity designed to update the ERS manuals has as its primary objective to produce a single, easy to access document that updates and summarizes the education reform support research, documented experience and concepts as well as provide operational guidance to USAID and other international agency education officers in promoting and providing assistance to national education reform efforts.

Joe DeStefano (CCFC) and Luis Crouch (RTI) began to collaborate this quarter to update the ERS series. There are several basic questions driving this piece of work: What are we talking about when we say *education reform*? What are the key reforms that education systems need? How do the reforms get brought about? What the research tell us about the “how”? And how do projects get designed to impact reform?

In addition to synthesizing ERS findings, the team is attempting to research and understand the sequencing process of reform efforts to contribute additional lessons learned and insights to policy-makers and field staff.

#### Organizational Development and Donor Effectiveness

There is now an unprecedented degree of support and financing for improving education systems; a strong international mandate for change through Poverty Reduction Strategies, the Fast Track Initiative, national action plans, and new policy frameworks and legislation; and a broad consensus about the importance of education among the development community. What is

less evident, however, are the required resources, institutional and organizational capacities, and effective capacity-building strategies required to make these goals and mandates reality. The focus of EQUIP2 research in the coming year will be to identify and promote practices in donor strategies and project interventions that are effective in achieving strategic objectives and in developing the organizational and institutional capacity for sustainable improvement.

Work in this program area will begin following the EQUIP2 quarterly meeting in April.

### School Fees

Elimination of school fees is an active policy agenda in the U.S. and broader donor community. However, little is known about the medium- and long-term impact of school fees elimination or of the dynamic within communities and schools regarding education finance. The focus of EQUIP2 activities in 2006 will be to develop a knowledge base about the impact of eliminating school fees on education results, and to identify best practices in eliminating financial barriers to school attendance while maintaining school quality.

Following the development of a policy brief and framework for looking at the school fees issue, the EQUIP2 designed and initiated preparations for an on-line moderated discussion on 6 aspects of the fees issue. The intent is to bring the debate to the larger international community, including education community, researchers, and implementing partners. Arrangements were made with the Global Learning Portal to host the discussion, moderators and shadow moderators were identified, and efforts were made to get access to the latest research from the World Bank. This work was then put on hold pending the outcomes of a conference in Nairobi. It is expected that the discussion and the expanded research agenda will begin in earnest in the following quarter.

### **Obstacles and Proposed Solutions**

EQUIP2 continues to operate in a dynamic environment where priorities, funding, and opportunities can shift quickly. The project management seeks to take advantage of this environment by remaining flexible. As has been the case in the past, the funding uncertainty and challenges of cost share continue to occupy management effort. A close collaboration with the CTO and Project Director and agreement on the broad goals of the project continues to be an important factor in enabling EQUIP2 to address these challenges effectively.

### **Financial Summary**

<b>Type of Expenditure</b>	<b>Current Quarter Expenditures</b>	<b>Total Expended</b>	<b>Obligated Balance Remaining</b>
<b>Core Funding</b>	210,783	3,300,231	1,631,447
<b>Federal Share</b>	210,828	3,228,136	1,060,280
<b>Recipient Share</b>	(45)	72,095	571,167
<b>Total Cost Share %</b>		2.2%	53.9%

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

#### **Summary:**

#### **Existing Associate Awards**

##### ***Education Policy and Data Center (EPDC)***

The Education Policy and Data Center was able to fulfill several key objectives during the past quarter. The EPDC continued to work with Redwood Company to redesign the database, utilize a new reporting tool, and create a new website. The team focused on testing and making adjustments to these new products during the month of March. The EPDC plans to release the revised data system and website during the following quarter.

The Center also achieved many goals in the area of policy and analysis. In February, the EPDC held an Advisory Council Meeting, demonstrating the new data system and website, presenting the new expanded projections methodology and a new paper on the analysis of factors affecting attendance in primary school. The Advisory Board Members contributed vital feedback which the group plans to incorporate in our research and data system. The EPDC team also completed the data collection and analysis of early childhood indicators for 10 countries and produced 10 Early Childhood Profiles for the UNESCO Global Monitoring Report. Lastly, the EPDC participated in the ADEA Biennial Conference in Gabon, showcasing the data system and other products.

##### ***El Salvador***

The USAID/El Salvador EQUIP2 Strengthening Basic Education Program in El Salvador was proposed as a two phase project development initiative. During this quarter EQUIP2 has accomplished Phase I, a brief period for planning and project design with USAID, MOE, and the other partners (FEPADE and SAVE THE CHILDREN), and is developing Phase II that consists of project implementation.

This first quarter has been an intense period of planning, redesigning of the project, and establishing the managerial and administrative capacity for the project. Results for this quarter include:

- a) Agreement between MOE, USAID and the three implementers on an integrated workplan. EQUIP2 took a leadership role to plan and carry out the development of an Integrated Work Plan with primary activities, roles, responsibilities and timelines;
- b) Formal Launching of the Program, identification of EQUIP2 team and establishment of administrative procedures;
- c) The initiation of National Education Accounts (NEA) activity. Working jointly with MOE, EQUIP2 developed a detailed work plan and a conceptual framework for its development;
- d) Elaboration of Study Programs and design of the comprehensive strategy. To begin the preparation of the materials, EQUIP2 brought an expert in language competencies to review the language competencies that had been developed, review the materials currently being used for teaching language and to carry out meetings with key personnel from MOE on its plans for the materials development. EQUIP2 also began the preparation of the Study Programs, beginning

with the first grade, and began the development of the comprehensive strategy for the elaboration of materials and teachers training modules;

e) Monitoring and Evaluation Plan. EQUIP2 developed the monitoring and evaluation strategy and presented the PMP to USAID.

### ***Egypt Basic Education Program (ERP)***

The following activities have been completed this quarter on the Egypt ERP project.

#### **Community Participation/ Capacity for Decentralization (CP/CD)**

Several Governorates created special Reform Units and initiated work on long-range education reform plans to assist them in answering MOE requests for more specific and innovative annual budget proposals. These efforts will be critical as the MOE demands more specific and innovative annual budget proposals from their Governorate offices.

School-to-Work: The TERNC's (Technical Education Reform National Committee) January 2006 meeting was attended by the newly appointed Minister of Education and focused on progress toward the development of an Action Plan as well as achievements of the nine working groups. The ERP STW team also provided ongoing support to the MOE in adapting occupational standards. In addition to STW, the new CYM programs were initiated in Fayoum and Marg; expansion programs were started in Beni Sweif, Fayoum, and Qena; and Aswan is preparing to expand. Fifty-five NGO and BOT staff from six Governorates initiated into the 'CYM Trainers Network' and six Governorate supervisors were hired to manage the day-to-day training and management of operations. Students and supervisors (120) from Marg and Fayoum were trained in information systems.

#### **Professional Development**

Undersecretaries, district directors, and supervisors collaborated with ERP on the development of a standards-based Classroom Observation Form to be used across all ERP districts. ERP also began looking at the organizational structure of central and local PD entities and identifying their roles and responsibilities. A professional development system framework for reform was developed through an inclusive process that started early in September 2004 and included 600 system stakeholders from both training and supervisory systems from all levels. It articulates a decentralized, standards-based model for reform and identifies a system vision, mission and core tasks; the responsibilities by level within the system; and draws linkages between the central, muddiriya, idarra and school levels.

Creative Science Education Initiative (CSEI): The Creative Science Education Initiative offered under UNDESD1 introduces a series of scientific fables as supportive materials for primary level science learning, it includes teacher training in creative and critical thinking, lesson planning, on-site follow-up, and use of an evaluative classroom observation tool. Thirty-three school-university teams submitted proposals for "action and decision-oriented research." The review committee completed rating of the proposals by mid-March, however, the meeting to determine proposal funding was postponed because of a break-up in relations between USAID and the MOHE.

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<sup>1</sup> United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development

## **Standards**

To move forward on review and adoption of the performance standards for student teachers, ERP presented the process and outcome of efforts to develop performance standards and indicators at the primary and secondary levels (for Arabic, Mathematics, Sciences, and Social Studies subjects) to the Education Sector Committee of the Supreme Council of Universities. The representatives were invited to attend the next meeting of the Sector Committee to continue the discussion, especially related to the future steps—establishing rubrics, developing tools, and pilot testing. However, because of a break-up in relations between USAID and the MOHE, FOER/ERP was forced to withdraw from the next meeting.

## **Monitoring and Evaluation**

ERP is supporting the General Department of Information, Statistics and Computer (GDISC) in the implementation and installation of the MOE nationwide EMIS and assisting GDISC's director, Mr. Mohamed Abdel Fattah, and GDISC technical staff; to design an installation and training plan to pilot the use of the web-based EMIS system to all schools of selected Idarras. ERP has begun building GDISC staff capacity, with the vision of expanding EMIS functionality nationwide. ERP identified the Fayoum governorate for the EMIS pilot. In collaboration with the Undersecretary, Mr. Samir Ibrahim and Muddiriya Statistical Unit (which has a functional EMIS system), ERP will expand EMIS system to all Fayoum schools. ERP is supporting this effort by assessing governorate technical and human resources, assisting in identifying the availability of training locations, electronic training materials, and trainers and providing support in system installation.

ERP is providing technical assistance to the National Center for Examinations and Education Evaluations (NCEEE) to develop standardized tests that measure critical thinking, problem solving, and content knowledge in Arabic, Science, and Math. Data collection for the EHE Survey was also completed this quarter. Data on nearly 16,000 students from over 7,000 households in all governorates (with an emphasis on the seven ERP governorates) were collected. The preliminary report is being written.

## ***Georgia General Education Decentralization and Accreditation (GEDA)***

Completion of GEDA staffing and provision of STTA were a primary focus this past quarter as regional offices and the first tranche of ERC sites were selected. Consultants, Drs Bonnie Prince and Amy Lezberg traveled to Georgia to work with the Ministry of Education and Science to examine the accreditation process. At the end of January, in response to the Ministry's request for vocational education support, Dr. Bonnie Prince presented a Ministry-wide workshop which focused on: 1) community colleges as a viable structure for linking secondary schools and work opportunities; and 2) further developing the vocational accreditation process and related standards and criteria for the nascent State Accreditation Service. Dr. Amy Lezberg continued her work in higher education accreditation by conducting a number of workshops in March for Ministry staff, university rectors and quality assurance personnel.

The Regional Advisor for Eastern Georgia, Dr. Howard Williams, arrived in February and Dr. Dori Nielson, Regional Advisor for Western Georgia, arrived in March to take up responsibilities

associated with establishing her office, and staff for Batumi. Ten new staff members were hired in the main Tblisi Office to address the needs of accreditation, decentralization, ERC refurbishment and project support. In early February, Glenn Strachan (AED COP Macedonia) conducted a wireless feasibility study for all of Georgia. His recommendations were presented to the GEDA staff and a concept paper was shared with USAID, Georgian government officials, and potential private sector partners. Logistically this study was supported by GEDA, but fully funded by AED.

In March, project staff were informed that GEDA would experience a 25 percent reduction in the overall project budget. As a result, Jessica Jester Quijada, the GEDA Program Officer, traveled to the field to assist with procurement, budget resubmission and consequent staffing reorganization. Despite the loss in funding, the first tender for renovation of ten ERC sites was issued, as well as tenders for furniture and electronic equipment for the first thirty ERCs. The reprogrammed budget was submitted to USAID at the end of March 2006.

### ***Ghana Basic Education Comprehensive Assessment System (BECAS)***

During the first quarter of 2006, the Ghana BECAS project staff completed the analysis of the National Education Assessment test results. Local staff, local and international university consultants and home office personnel contributed to finalizing the report, which was submitted to USAID in March 2006. Preliminary planning for the last component of the comprehensive assessment system, the School Education Assessment, began. Districts and circuits were identified for circuit supervisor (test administrator) training. Tests were developed, and training and administration schedules were made. Since ASU members were committed to CRDD's development of a Continuous Assessment program outside of Accra, they were unable to participate in most of the training activities planned for them last quarter.<sup>2</sup>

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, GES and the Ministry of Education to discuss GES involvement in the School Education Assessment administration which is planned for July 2006, as well as for the future planning of assessment activities in CRDD. The concerns that CRDD/ASU will be unprepared to take over the assessment work established by Ghana BECAS grew with the absence of the CRDD/ASU members from all project activities last quarter.

### ***Guatemala Social Investment and Policy Dialogue (SIPD)***

SIPD project continued to support the MOE and the broader educational community in their efforts to create a new fiscal, legal, policy, institutional, and civic framework to achieve the educational goals of Guatemala. The project includes the generation of a short, medium and long term investment plan; the identification of model finance and investment strategies at national, Departmental and Municipal levels; the creation of a consensus platform of legal, institutional and policy reforms that facilitate more effective and greater education sector investment; and the support of the MOE in its efforts to improve administrative and financial management for transparency, accountability, efficiency and effective decision-making.

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<sup>2</sup> Two ASU members attended a one-day training offered by Dr. Etsey in Data Analysis and one short meeting.

In the first quarter of 2006, the team completed a study on returns on investment in education, which was published and distributed throughout Guatemala. Ernesto Schiefelbein, former Minister of Education of Chile and a well-respected educator, traveled to Guatemala on behalf of the project to discuss the importance of quality education and increased investment in education. The presentation was done before a variety of audiences through television and radio interviews, newspaper reports and public conferences. The presentation was considered a success because it linked accessible concepts such as the return on investment in education, the need for greater investment and the fiscal challenges and options this poses, while keeping sight of the importance of quality in education. In addition to the presentation, the SIPD project continued to support a national campaign for the promotion of retention of children in school, which has been disseminated in the media (TV, radio and press).

### ***Honduras Improving Student Achievement Project (MIDEH)***

During this quarter, the MIDEH technical team worked on developing standards for grades 7-9, will present a proposal to the MoE at the end of May. The project also collaborated with a local NGO on a manual documenting the process of standards development for grades 1-6, which provides guidance for the development of standards in higher grades and serves as a blueprint for the Ministry of Education for the development of standards in other curricular areas.

In testing activities, MIDEH continued intensive work on monthly formative tests in Math and Spanish for grades 1-6, which will be finalized, printed, and delivered to schools in the next quarter, when the validation process will begin.

The Project supported intensive training for Ministry of Education departmental coordinators, technical advisors, and facilitators during this quarter. Training focused on the EFA commitment and strategies for reaching EFA goals, as well as the incorporation and use of standards and tests based on the new curriculum. Activities also included targeted training and follow-up with directors and teachers from low-performing schools. The Project presented experiences and results at the March 2006 CIES conference, focusing on the use of content standards & assessments to improve student achievement.

### ***Jordan ERfKE Support Project***

The following activities were completed in Jordan during the first quarter of 2006.

#### **Component 1: Early Childhood Education**

The ECE team continued to make progress on activities related to curriculum development, kindergarten refurbishment and teacher training.

ECE staff members participated in a National Curriculum modification workshop in January, which was led by Elizabeth Spier (AIR) and Fred Wood (AED). Through the workshop, staff members and MoE Curriculum staff completed Phase I of the modification process, which led to a review of the modification framework, completed on March 7<sup>th</sup>. The National Curriculum Framework was completed at the end of March. Several teacher training activities took priority this quarter, including decisions on topics for in-service teacher training and two in-service teacher training visits to Jarash and Aijoun. The Advanced II kindergarten teacher training

manual was completed and approved by the MoE in March. The ECE team also focused on the development of materials and training for principals this quarter. A booklet for raising awareness sessions was completed and approved by the MOE Training Department. ESP/ECE completed training workshops for 267 school principals in February.

Finally, renovations of the 120 ECE classrooms continued this quarter as an assessment of clusters 7 and 8 was completed. ESP staff handed over the classrooms in Jarash to the MOE in January, and the inauguration of the kindergarten in Karak was opened by HE Minister of Education Touqan and Mike Harvey Deputy Mission Director USAID. It is expected that by the end of 2006 all 120 ECE classroom will be fully renovated. Additional activities completed this quarter included the presentation and approval of the accreditation areas for ECE and the completion of the parental involvement plan.

### Component 2: Youth Technology and Careers (YTC)

ESP participated in the World Bank's mid-term evaluation. Feedback from the Bank team on the YTC components was favorable, in regards to progress in the MIS and technology areas. The report supported many of ERfKE's proposals that ESP endorses for reforming professional development – shifting from supply to demand for training, lessening the burdens of change management on teachers, designing flexible and varied support to teachers, migrating from learning about technology to learning through technology, and supplying teacher resources such as teachers' guides, etc. ESP is reviewing these findings with the MoE.

ESP finalized the e-MIS project design with agreement by its partners, the Ministry of Education and JAID Productions, and approval by USAID. The plan calls for all modules to be developed by June 2007, with completion of a two-year period of module testing by Fall, 2007. The first storylines and three initial modules are ready for presentation to the technical committee.

ESP received Ministry approval to design the MIS subject-specific professional development program and to deliver MIS in-service training and support through a flexible system that comprises formal training, communities of practice and school development units. Instructional design teams have nearly completed the authoring of the training program that addresses problematic curriculum areas that teachers find difficult to teach. The interest and commitment of the MoE to a new vision for professional development was the topic of Secretary General Dr. Tayseer Al-Noa`imi's address at the opening of the Dead Sea Retreat for MIS Teachers' Professional Development (February 7-9<sup>th</sup>). The subject-specific training is designed on needs assessment results acquired in early January, 2006.

School-to-Career launched programs that provide local working groups with information about the transition from school to career in their communities, and it expanded its pilot to four schools in Aqaba. One of STC's program components, Community Youth Mapping was officially launched in the four regions. Students and supervisors received training on CYM methodology and tools, and teams of youth began mapping school-to-career opportunities and resources in their communities. In addition, NCHRD began its work in career counseling, training six career counselors working in STC pilot schools. ESP assisted the Ministry to install and configure the Hashem Data Center equipment and testing of Internet connections, including the installation of Eduwave on Hashem servers. Initial connectivity tests between Hashem and various Discovery Schools demonstrated noticeable increases in performance. ESP subsequently began planning

the test deployment of a remote network administration system, SMS, in twenty sites. At the school level, ESP launched wireless connectivity in all 5 pilot schools, and completed the installation of the Ahmad Toukan lab infrastructure and installation of computers, desks, etc.

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

The first quarter of 2006 was mainly spent on further cleaning and editing of the EMIS 2005 dataset and releasing of auto installable 2005 data CD containing data dissemination module. Once data reports were ready, EMIS project staff conducted a total of sixteen data utilization workshops throughout the country. The workshops were conducted in six divisions with more than 600 people from division, district and zonal offices participating in the exercise. During the sessions, data CDs and hard copies of the reports were provided to managers to explain data trends from 2005 and compare these with the previous year's data. The event went very well and people showed great interest in the information presented, especially the DDM (Data Dissemination Module) CDs.

The draft report on school statistics 2005 was released in November 2005. The report contains summary information about primary and secondary schools. The main information in this report is Summary tables on but not limited to: (a) Number of schools by location, proprietor, type, districts; (b) Number of students by location, proprietor, type, districts; (c) Number of Teachers by location, proprietor, type, districts; and (d) Flow rates including promotions, repeaters and dropouts by districts and gender.

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

During this quarter, RAP-DM was informed of additional budget cuts and has been asked to submit a revised technical and budget application. RAP-DM has been asked to streamline its costs and support the Missions' priorities of solid partnership with the Ministry of Education and increasing program emphasis in the North. Although RAP-DM has a comparative advantage in providing technical assistance to the Ministry of Education to support the process of devolution/decentralization, for USAID's planning and reporting purposes, it is important to be able to identify project implementation milestones.

A second wave of training of trainers took place this quarter. Nine AEs received the three day training. A participants' guide was developed for the training and provided participants with substantial narrative for the different financial tables within the guide. The data collection process for the PARE execution indicator that is part of the PMP was launched basing the information exclusively on what the AE's report as having been implemented. Three degrees of centralization / deconcentration are included in our data collection tool: (A) Centralized implementation where money is transferred for a given activity that is supervised directly by the central level, (B) semi-centralized execution where a central directorate puts in the funding request, money is transferred, and implementation is managed by a regional office and (C) execution déconcentrée where the AE puts in the funding request and the implementation is, of course, handled by the regional offices. The pilot phase of the Study on the effect of Distance on Enrollment Rates has been completed in Tominian, and teams are currently in Douentza

collecting data. The entire MEN structure is moving forward with the plan to do the arbitrage for 2007 in May.

***Namibia Basic Education Support, Phase 3 (BES 3)***

Not Available at this time.

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

Construction and renovation activities for the last 4 of our 30 schools were completed this quarter and provisionally approved in March 06. All schools are now fully equipped with furniture, and those with electricity are in the process of receiving their computer equipment. Student enrollment, including enrollment of girls is still high in all of the project supported schools.

An internal evaluation of the teacher training component of the project (SITT) was conducted this quarter. Findings and recommendations were shared with the project and USAID in March 2006. Overall, the evaluation was very positive and acknowledged the significant achievements and progress the project has already made. A list of recommendations on how to improve and build on what has already been achieved was also communicated to the project staff. At USAID's request, an external evaluation of both CLASS and SITT projects will be conducted in mid-June.

Training activities continued all throughout the quarter, with departmental trainers training as many as 500 teachers and principals. Evaluation instruments such as questionnaires, focus group discussions, and classroom and school observations were also developed to assess the impact of the training. Monitoring efforts began in February.

***South Sudan Technical Support Project***

The EQUIP2 / Sudan project entered a new phase this quarter. Two new Long Term Technical Advisors (LTTAs) joined the team and preparations were made for their posting to the field. Martina Nicolls, Senior Education Advisor, joins AED with 25 years of experience in education and management training in Australia, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, China, Kashmir, Nepal, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea and Syria. Kenneth Masungu, Education Advisor, is a native of South Sudan with twenty-six years of experience in teaching and education administration, and non-profit planning and management. He has extensive experience in Libya, Egypt, the United States and Sudan as a school administrator, principal, and teacher. A six-day orientation was conducted at the end of March for the new LTTAs in which critical technical, logistical and administrative information was transferred.

Conversations regarding AED's technical Scope of Work and roles for the new LTTAs and Short Term Technical Advisors (STTAs) were continued with stakeholders, including USAID, the Ministry of Education, Sport and Technology (MoEST), and key advisors. February and March

saw no AED activity in South Sudan; however, systems for security, reporting, logistics and coordination were established.

### ***Uganda Support for Education Management Information System (EMIS)***

On November 30, 2005, the Uganda EMIS project came to a close.

### ***Zambia: Improving Information and Strengthening Policy Implementation***

This quarter marked the last leg of the PEPFAR funded sensitisation and mobilisation campaign for the financial year 2005-2006. In this quarter, 3,937 MOE staff were reached through sensitisation and mobilisation campaign in both provinces, and a total of 793 staff went for counselling and testing and received their results by the end of February. To date the initiative has reached approximately 6,605 MOE staff in the two provinces, against the set target of 9,500 for FY05. The MOE continued to demonstrate its commitment to HIV/AIDS testing and counselling by making additional funds available to support participants' costs to attend the counselling sessions.

During this period other major accomplishments included the development of an Information and Communication Technology policy for the MOE to ensure quality standards and efficient delivery of education. Additionally, a **Bursaries Management System** has been designed, implemented and deployed within the Bursary Committee Secretariat. This Secretariat is responsible for the selection and disbursement of student loans and grants. Within the first month of its use the new system has helped the Secretariat identify 330 registrations for 2005 and over 100 registrations for 2006.

### **Anticipated Associate Awards**

- Nigeria