



Quarterly Report:

**Basic Education Support and
Training Project (BEST)**

April 1 to June 30, 2010



Submitted by:

Academy for Educational Development, AED

*11th
Quarterly Report*

Submission: July 2010

Table of Contents

List of Acronyms	4
I. Overview:	5
II. BEST Mission and Objectives	6
III. Reports for the Quarter, April to June 2010	7
A. Administration and Operations	7
B. Technical Report.....	7
Community Participation Activities	7
<i>Training Social Workers in Amran, Rayma and Hodeida Governorates</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>Conducted Two Workshop to Develop Awareness Raising Messages to Promote Girl's Education</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>Conducted End-of-School Year Monitoring Visits to Targeted School Communities</i>	<i>8</i>
Gender Equity Activities.....	9
<i>Initiated Student Empowerment Groups in Cluster Schools in Amran, Rayma and Hodeida Governorates</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>Finalized the Development of the Gender Sensitization Materials for the BEST-Yemen Project.....</i>	<i>9</i>
Training Activities	10
<i>Trained Headmasters in Amran, Rayma and Hodeida Governorates</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>Facilitated Professional Development Visits and Training in the Governorates of Rayma and Hodeida.....</i>	<i>11</i>
MASS Reporting.....	11
Adult Literacy Activities.....	12
<i>Conducted Adult Literacy Training Workshop in Rayma and Hodeida Governorates ..</i>	<i>12</i>
<i>Conducted Adult Literacy Inspector Training from Hodeida and Rayma.....</i>	<i>12</i>
<i>Adult literacy Coordinator Conducts Supervisory Field Visits</i>	<i>12</i>
<i>Conducted Adult Literacy Facilitators Training in Thula- Amran Governorate</i>	<i>13</i>
School Renovation Activities	13
<i>Finalized Major Renovation of Four Schools in Amran, Rayma and Hodeida.....</i>	<i>13</i>
<i>Initiated Process to Launch Construction of Multi-purpose Centers in Rayma and Hodeida Governorates</i>	<i>14</i>

Education Management Information Systems Activities	14
<i>Facilitated “Basic Computer Skills” Training Course for the Heads of Divisions in Rayma</i>	14
<i>Conducted “Elaboration of Statistical Reports and Diagrams using Excel” for Amran, Rayma and Hodeida Governorates</i>	15
<i>Conducted three “Basic Management Skills” Training for Heads of Divisions in the Targeted District Education Offices in Amran, Rayma and Hodeida</i>	15
IV. Critical Challenges and Statement of Work for the Next Quarter	17
<i>In-country security issues and impact on progress.....</i>	17
<i>Investment capacity of recipient communities</i>	17
<i>Meeting demands of the funding agency while addressing beneficiaries’ expectations</i>	17
<i>Statement of Work for Next Quarter</i>	18
V. Accomplishment Charts	18

List of Acronyms

AED	Academy for Educational Development
AL	Adult Literacy
AWP	Annual Work Plan
BE	Basic Education Project
BEST	Basic Education Support and Training Project
BEDS	Basic Education Development Strategy
COP	Chief of Party
CP	Community Participation
CPF	Community Participation Facilitator
DG	Director General
DCOP	Deputy Chief of Party
DOE	District Office of Education
EFA	Education for All
EMIS	Education Management Information System
FC	Fathers' Council
FFS	Fully Functioning School
FDG	Focus Group Discussion
GOV	Governorate
GOY	Government of Yemen
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
LAEO	Literacy and Adult Education Organization
LOP	Life of Project
MASS	Multi-faceted Approach to Safe Schools
MC	Mothers' Council
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MFC	Mothers and Fathers Council
MFS	Minimally Functioning School
MOE	Ministry of Education
MPC	Multipurpose Center
MRT	Mobil Repair Team
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PC	Parent Council
PAMP	Project Advancement Monitoring Plan
PMP	Performance Management Plan
SSW	School Social Worker
STTA	Short Term Technical Assistant
TTI	Teacher Training Institute
TEP	Teacher Education Programs
ToT	Trainer of Trainers
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific & Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WB	World Bank
WP	Work Plan

USAID/YEMEN BASIC EDUCATION SUPPORT AND TRAINING (BEST) PROJECT

I. Overview:

The Eleventh Quarterly Report for Basic Education Support and Training (BEST) Yemen Project covers the period of April 1 to June 30. One of the challenges for this quarter was the acceleration of the school-based activities, especially in the area of training, due to the end of the 2009-2010 academic year. There was also the need to complete key baseline data gathering activities such as the testing of the achievement of students in the targeted sites in the areas of mathematics, science and Arabic. In this quarter, the BEST-Yemen Project met the challenge of finally closing down the field offices in Mareb and Shabwah governorates. These were maintained due to carryover activities undertaken by the project because of obligations made at the close of the previous USAID-funded Basic Education (EQUIP1) Project and startup of BEST-Yemen. The office closings included the disposition of furniture and equipment to the respective GOE offices. Between April and June, the project also accomplished the following activities among others:

- Conducted a series of refresher training workshop for one hundred and forty-one social workers from Amran, Rayma and Hodeida
- Facilitated social work trainers field visits to fifty-eight targeted school communities to measure the performance of school-based social workers and the fathers' and mothers' councils in each of the schools
- Gender Equity Coordinator initiated the idea of forming "Student Empowerment Groups" in eleven cluster schools on a pilot basis.
- Finalized the Development of the "Gender Sensitization Materials" for the BEST-Yemen Project that targets teachers, headmasters fathers' and mothers' councils
- Trained six hundred and twenty school headmasters and their deputies from four hundred schools in the governorates of Amran, Rayma and Hodeida
- Facilitated a series of hundred and thirty professional development visits to forty-one targeted schools in the governorates of Rayma and Hodeida.
- Conducted a series of adult literacy training workshops for facilitators from Rayma and Hodeida Governorates
- Finalized major renovation of four schools in Amran, Rayma and Hodeida governorates
- Initiated a process to launch construction of four Multi-Purpose Centers (MPC's) in Rayma and Hodeida Governorates

- Facilitated “Basic Computer Skills” Training Course for the Heads of Divisions in Rayma
- Conducted “Elaboration of Statistical Reports and Diagrams using Excel” for Amran, Rayma and Hodeida Governorates
- Conducted three “Basic Management Skills” Training for Heads of Divisions in the Targeted District Education Offices in Amran, Rayma and Hodeida

As the project completed the eleventh quarter the end of June, attention turned to the plans for the remaining 18 months in the life of the project (LOP) and, more immediately the implementation of a successful summer 2010 with special activities in the school communities and completion of the all-important school renovations and bidding for the third and final phase of school renovation activities. A big step in planning for 2011 was the completion of plans for the Third Professional Development Retreat for all BEST-Yemen Project Staff. This activity was projected for mid-July with a focus on acknowledging and making the most of the project successes to date while optimizing the strengths of the team and other resources in meeting the anticipated challenges of the future.

The sections that follow detail the accomplishments listed above as well as others while providing a clear indication of the work that remains for the LOP in reaching the main goal and objectives of the BEST-Yemen Project.

II. BEST Mission and Objectives

The BEST-Yemen Project is operating within the broad framework of the Government of Yemen’s (GOY) Basic Education Development Strategy (BEDS) which emphasizes:

- Access for Yemeni children to basic education
- Equity of opportunity for females and males to education services
- Quality improvements that place the student and the teacher at the center of the education system
- Improved capacity and internal efficiency of the Ministry of Education at all levels
- Sub-national participation in the improvement of education

Given this framework, the Mission Statement for the BEST Project is “bridging the gap between development activities and systems-building by increasing the relevance of policies, especially as related to achievement of gender objectives.”

While building on the experience and achievements of the BE Project, BEST-Yemen has expanded its work in consultation with the MOE and other donor partners so as to ensure sustainability of successful approaches and innovations. The work plan for BEST has been aligned with that of the MOE for 2010 and will be for successive years through the life of the project. The rationale for doing this is to effectively "mainstream" project work plans with GOY’s own educational development plans and implementation strategies so as to ensure complementation. BEST-Yemen is making every effort to simultaneously collaborate strategically with other related donor projects so as to create critical masses within and across programmatic areas for effectiveness, desired impact and optimum sustainability within the targeted communities, districts, governorates and, over time, elsewhere in the nation.

Against this background, the central goal and key objectives of the BEST-Yemen Project are expressed below.

BEST-Yemen Project Goal Statement: To strengthen the capacity of communities, schools and the Ministry of Education to sustain educational improvements for their children and their children's children.

Statement of BEST-Yemen Project Objectives:

- *To enhance the capacity of targeted MOE units at all levels to support educational improvement consistent with the national decentralization policy.*
- *To expand work on improvement of Education Management Information Systems (EMIS), learning environments, teacher training, Mothers' and Fathers' Councils (MFCs), learning materials and adult literacy in the schools and communities.*
- *To develop, with the MOE, a community school policy to address the issue of parity between boys' and girls' enrollment and retention in schools.*
- *To support development of policies and actions that result in recruitment and retention of female teachers.*

III. Reports for the Quarter, April to June 2010

This section describes the administrative, operational and technical accomplishments over the eleventh quarter of the project. Core and enabling activities are highlighted below by units and components with all planned and accomplished activities incorporated in the "accomplishment charts" presented in Section V.

A. Administration and Operations

In this quarter the project closed down its field offices in Mareb and Shabwah and completed the disposition of the project furniture and office equipment to the respective GOE offices.

The following summarizes other noteworthy activities under the administration and operations of the project during the quarter ending June 30, 2010:

- Staff Resignation of Senait Yemane Zerisenai, Office Caretaker.
- Project Operations Manual approved by the AED Headquarters for in-country use.
- Staff Benefits Manual reviewed and updated.
- Staff Resignation of Faiza Ali Al Sorouri, Administrative Assistant.
- Hired new staff Ali Al Nihari, Training Advisor and Mohammad Dhabhani, Driver.

B. Technical Report

Community Participation Activities



Training Social Workers in Amran, Rayma and Hodeida Governorates

From April 10 through 15, the project conducted a series of refresher training workshop for one hundred and forty-one (111 males and 30 females) social workers (SWs) from Amran, Rayma and Hodeida. School headmasters were also among the

participants. This workshop focused on the Ministry of Education's SW training manual (Part II) which aims at refreshing the social workers' and headmasters' skills in implementing and monitoring community participation activities in schools. The workshop also helped enhance the social workers' planning skills, ability to manage meetings effectively, and competencies in addressing the needs and challenges faced on daily. These and similar capacity building activities contribute to the improvement of the follow-up techniques of members of the fathers' and mothers' councils while further strengthening the role of community participation in school improvement.

Conducted Two Workshop to Develop Awareness Raising Messages to Promote Girl's Education



From April 19 through May 2, the project facilitated two workshops to develop "Awareness Raising Messages to Promote Girl's Education." It was attended by fifty-two participants (24 females and 28 males) from the Ministry of Education, other government ministries, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and representatives from the donor community. The main objective of this workshop was to produce a set of awareness

raising messages designed to target key populations. Among the audiences targeted are parents, community leaders, local governing councils, decision makers, school headmasters, teachers and students. This workshop also aimed at establishing partnership for future collaboration between the project, NGOs and other donors to further promote improvements in girls' education. Plans have been set for a six-day follow-up workshop to produce the final products of the awareness raising messages in different forms. The messages will be packaged in the form of booklets, brochures, posters and media flashes along with supplementary guides appropriate for each targeted group. The aim of these messages is to contribute in different places such as schools, mosques, streets and markets to the continuous awareness raising campaign for the sustainable promotion of girls' education in the targeted school communities and, with time, throughout Yemen.

Conducted End-of-School Year Monitoring Visits to Targeted School Communities

Prior to the closing of the academic year in June, twenty-seven (11 female and 16 male) social worker (SW) trainers implemented field visits to the 58 school communities targeted under the USAID-funded Basic Education Support and Training (BEST) Project in the governorates of



Amran, Hodeida and Rayma. The central purpose of these visits was to measure the performance of school-based social workers and the fathers' and mothers' councils (FMCs) in each of the schools. The SW trainers met with a total of 83 social workers (25 females and 58 males) and 84 parents' councils (31 mothers, 52 fathers and 1 mixed). All key activities were assessed utilizing observation and interview techniques so as to compile relevant performance data on the two main targeted groups.

In the case of the parents' councils, the performance areas assessed included support of student council and out-of-class activities such as sports and health practices, school

environment improvements, school maintenance and furnishings, cleaning campaigns and an array of community livelihood projects including classroom construction. Many other indicators of school-community improvements were also assessed, ranging from meetings held to discuss student achievement, attendance records, school visitations by parents, literacy issues, and concerns related to enhancing girls' education. Visits assessed the SWs in areas of performance such as preparation of and follow-up on the annual work plan for each school, assistance to the handicapped, solutions to problems related to school dropouts, communications with parents about the importance of girls' education, and the documentation of the work being completed throughout the school year. The results of the monitoring visits to project schools will result in a report on the findings with recommendations for improvements in each of the areas in which weaknesses were detected. The school visitation and monitoring activity contributes to the improvement of school-community relations while enhancing the retention of both boys and girls in schools. The activity is also an integral part of USAID's approach to investing in sustainable social and educational development.

Gender Equity Activities

Initiated Student Empowerment Groups in Cluster Schools in Amran, Rayma and Hodeida Governorates



From April 26 through May 5, the project Gender Equity Coordinator conducted a nine-day field visit to Amran, Rayma and Hodeida governorates. The main objective of the visits to select targeted school communities was to introduce the idea of forming student empowerment groups in cluster schools on a pilot basis. In each of ten schools, the concept was introduced to the school headmaster, social worker and representatives of the fathers' and mothers' councils. The idea of forming this

group emerged as a result of previous visits and the observations associated with gender disparities in the schools. Students, mostly girls, are in desperate need of basic skills that will enable them to participate more actively, have better self esteem, and make improved decisions by themselves. The main task of the student empowerment groups will be to promote gender equity in schools and enable students to learn and practice a number of life-skills such as communications, self confidence, problem solving, decision making and leadership. All these are essential for their daily lives in school and at home. The main accomplishment of this visit was the selection of a number of teachers (both males/ females) and facilitators (mostly females) as well as female volunteer teachers to take an active part in these groups and train students (both boys and girls) in these basic life-skills areas. Another key accomplishment was to motivate headmasters and members of the fathers' councils in select schools to support the process of forming mothers' councils where they have not been established. This is essentially the first step in promoting gender equity and, subsequently, initiating student empowerment groups. As a result of this activity, information and approaches garnered from the 2004-2008 USAID-funded Basic Education (EQUIP1) Project that targeted three other governorates were introduced to the fathers' and mothers' councils in Hodeida and Rayma as a means of cascading successes in the promotion of girls' education while further ensuring the sustainability of parental involvement

Finalized the Development of the Gender Sensitization Materials for the BEST-Yemen Project

During the month of April, the project Gender Equity Coordinator finalized the development of two gender sensitization materials for teachers, headmaster fathers' and mothers' councils. The development of the material came as a result of the gender disparities noticed in the targeted schools. There was an urgent need to develop this material since Yemen has the highest gender gap in the world and special focus was given to the teaching process, since the school is one of the most important media for teaching children besides the family and the society. The school is expected to be the place that teaches children to be the people who respect the equality of both boys and girls in any aspect of life. The main objective of this material is to provide gender sensitization training and familiarize targeted groups with gender issues, increase awareness of negative impact of prevailing gender roles, help build gender friendly school environment, introduce girl friendly teaching as well as aware targeted groups of the importance of women (mothers) role in schools illustrating examples from real life experiences and success generated from BE and BEST Yemen project success stories.

Training Activities

Trained Headmasters in Amran, Rayma and Hodeida Governorates

From March 4 through 28, the project trained a total of six hundred and twenty (620) school headmasters and their deputies (556 males and 63 females) in a sixteen-day workshop for representatives from 400 schools in the governorates of Amran, Rayma and Hodeida. This Part III Training was immediately followed by a four-day practical application in each of the headmaster's respective schools. The training mainly focused on providing the participants with skills required for effective school management while introducing modern child-centered educational methods so as to promote friendly school environments more conducive to teaching and learning. The training also enhanced the headmasters' abilities to function as positive team players and constructive colleagues with the teaching staff. Participants were prepared as leaders to further encourage a spirit of optimism, enthusiasm and self-motivation while creating a positive attitude within the school environment. The results of this training are intended to impact the ability of the headmasters to plan and implement school activities that better serve the teaching-learning process and promote the talents of each student. Among other areas, special consideration was given to performance assessment, and the use of alternative ways for disciplining students so as to avoid corporal punishment. The training has enabled all participants to be able to formulate improved school-based management plans that are essential to effective schools. These and similar training activities contribute to the improvement of effective supervision, school management, and sustainability in the school administration process within the Yemeni education system.



Facilitated Professional Development Visits and Training in the Governorates of Rayma and Hodeida.

From 15 April through 7 May, the project facilitated a series of 130 professional development visits to forty-one (41) targeted schools in the governorates of Rayma and Hodeida. These visits were conducted by thirty-three (33) teacher inspectors (3 females and 30 males) over the three-week period. The main objectives of the school-based professional development were: 1) to meet teachers, headmasters and heads of fathers' and mothers' councils and review the progress made in schools, 2) to record the performance of teachers and headmasters in terms of effective planning and improvement in the classroom and overall school environment; 3) to provide feedback and relevant technical support in the areas that were determined as requiring improvement.

From May 9 through 20, the project conducted twenty-one (21) professional development workshops at eight (8) cluster schools in Rayma and Hodeida. These workshops provided additional training on the major weaknesses identified during the school visits in the performance of teachers and headmasters and proposed solutions to the practical problems faced. The workshops provided an excellent opportunity for participants to exchange successful experiences. These professional development trainings contribute to the sustainability of supervisory practices designed to improve teacher and headmaster performance in each of the governorates targeted under the USAID-funded BEST-Yemen Project.



MASS Reporting

From April to June of 2010, the BEST-Yemen Project team accomplished the following in relation to the Multi-faceted Approach to Safe School (MASS) activities:

- The teams formed from MOE, BEST and Tahseen (Tahseen office was contracted through the Mission for translation and “Yemenization” of MASS “Doorways”) have worked together in yemenization of all three volumes of Doorways.
- Three different training manuals (for teachers, social workers and students) were produced by Tahseen and the teams reviewed them prior to printing.
- 50 copies of each training manuals were printed and delivered to BEST Project. These manuals will be used in Training of Trainers (ToT) by BEST Project Training Component during the 2010-2011 school year.

Adult Literacy Activities

Conducted Adult Literacy Training Workshop in Rayma and Hodeida Governorates



From April 3 through 15, the project Adult Literacy (AL) Coordinator facilitated two different AL training workshops. The first of these was conducted from April 3 through 8 in the area of AL Reading-Skills-Level II for forty-three (43) AL facilitators (42 females and 1 male), six (6) AL Inspectors (4 females and 2 female) and ten (10) AL Director Generals, and ten (1 female and 9 male) representatives from the Literacy for Adult Education

Organization (LAEO) from Rayma and Hodeida. The main objectives of this Reading-Skills-Level II training were to evaluate the work progress of the REFLECT Methodology, address the challenges encountered in the AL classes, and enriched the participants skills so as to enable them to overcome any challenges faced during the teaching-learning process. The other training workshop was held from April 3 through 15 as a twelve-day Life-Skills-Level II training workshop for thirty-one (31) AL facilitators and inspectors (all females). The main objective of this Level II workshop was to enable the participants to effectively implement life-skills activities in AL classes. This training has provided the facilitators with skills that will enable them to conduct life-skills activities from topics raised by the women participants themselves, such as personal hygiene, nutritious family diets, skills for managing instructional problems they face, relevant decision making, and enhancing self confidence among others. As a functional literacy program, the resultant BEST-Yemen Project training of adults, especially females, contributes to the enhancement of a more informed citizenry who are able to improve their lives, that of their families and the broader society.

Conducted Adult Literacy Inspector Training from Hodeida and Rayma

From June 19 through June 24, the project conducted a six-day training for ten (10) AL inspectors (8 females and 2 males) from Hodeida and Rayma. This training aimed at providing the inspector with refresher training of their roles and responsibilities. It also provided them with the knowledge and the skills that will enable them to conduct an effective monitoring and evaluation to the AL classes in the field as well as provided them with the skills of writing reports

Adult literacy Coordinator Conducts Supervisory Field Visits



From June 7 through June 23, the project AL Coordinator conducted supervisory visits to fifty-two (52) Adult literacy classes targeted under BEST-Yemen Project (13 in Rayma and 39 in Hodeida). The central objective of these visits was to assess the AL training outcomes in the field. The AL learners' level of understanding to the REFLECT Methodology was assessed as well as their ability to find practical solutions to problems and challenges that might be faced by the learners and facilitators.

In these visits, the AL Coordinator had the opportunity to enhance understanding of the life

skills needed by the community. It was noted that most of the AL training goals were achieved in a satisfactory manner in accordance with the standards and criteria set by the AL program. Despite the obstacles that were faced in thirteen AL classes due to building renovations, the project was able to overcome the difficulties through coordination with the community and by finding alternatives to sustain the related field activities.

Conducted Adult Literacy Facilitators Training in Thula- Amran Governorate

From June 25 through 30, the project AL Coordinator conducted a six-day training for seventeen (17) AL facilitators from Thula District. The training aimed at introducing reading skills and producing reading texts from the AL learners' dialogues. It also enabled the facilitators to assess the needs through utilizing a descriptive process as well as by applying practical methods to resolve problems that might arise at any time during the teaching and learning process.

School Renovation Activities

Finalized Major Renovation of Four Schools in Amran, Rayma and Hodeida

During the month of April and May, the project finalized the renovation work of four targeted schools in Amran, Rayma and Hodeida as follows.

1. Ahmad Al-Radad School in Zabid District in Hodeida, major renovation work included renovating three classrooms, three latrines, the administrative office and store, as well as building three new classrooms and rehabilitating the entire school to be accessed by the handicapped.
2. Al-Nour School in Thula'a District in Amran, major renovation work included renovating eleven classrooms, the administrative office and store, as well as building seven new latrines, a privacy wall around the school, installing a water tank as well as rehabilitating the entire school to be accessed by the handicapped.
3. Al-Eid Al-Fedhi in Al-Jabeen District in Rayma, major renovation work included rehabilitation of three classrooms, addition of three new classrooms, and a privacy wall around the school property as well as rehabilitating the entire school to be accessed by the handicapped.
4. Jamal Iddin Al-Hetar in Al-Jabeen District in Rayma, this school rehabilitation activity included renovation of nine classrooms, three latrines, the administrative office, and a storage room as well as rehabilitating the entire school to be accessed by the handicapped.



Before Renovation



After Renovation

The above schools were delivered to committees consisting of representatives from engineers from the Governorate Offices of Education, monitoring engineering firms, renovation subcontractors, structural assessment firms, school headmasters and local community members. The key representatives of all parties signed the final delivery and inspection report in verification that the buildings meet all the required structural criteria. The improvement of facilities contributes significantly to the enhancement in the access and quality of the education being provided in Yemeni basic education, especially for girls.

During the same time period, the project launched its Mobile Repair Team (MRT) activities in governorate of Hodeida as part of the minor renovations to be carried out in the schools targeted under the project. The three-person MRT is equipped with a pickup truck which is



outfitted with a generator, electric saws and drills, welding equipment, and a compressor spray painter. The MRT began its work by visiting the schools, organizing volunteer groups at each school and soliciting the participation of the parents and community in activities such as repairing broken school furniture. The MRT, with the help of community volunteers, managed to repair 55 double desks in Al Thulaya and Al Majd schools in Bait Al Faqih District. The MRT has

now moved on to repeat this collaborative repair process in other targeted schools in Zabid. These USAID-funded school renovation and minor repair activities contribute to school improvements in terms of the access, equity and quality of basic education while supporting the Mission's decentralization, community participation and stabilization plans.

Initiated Process to Launch Construction of Multi-purpose Centers in Rayma and Hodeida Governorates

On the 23rd of June, the project initiated Phase III of its school renovations and construction activities by publishing the Requests for Proposals (RFPs) for construction of four Multipurpose Community Centers (MPC) that will be located at the main targeted cluster schools in the governorates of Hodeida and Rayma. Each MPC will consist of large capacity hall that will accommodate one hundred people, a computer lab, an administrative office, and storage room. The design of each MPC is based on the needs identified in the district and school communities being served by the center as well as the successes of similar constructions and related community-school activities in the governorates of Amran, Mareb and Shabwah in the previous basic education project funded by USAID/Yemen. The multipurpose community centers are a lasting contribution to providing infrastructure across the targeted districts and governorates in support of decentralization, enhanced community participation and more stable societies.

Education Management Information Systems Activities

Facilitated "Basic Computer Skills" Training Course for the Heads of Divisions in Rayma

From March 20 through April 1, the project facilitated a twelve-day training course in basic computer skills for twenty-one (18 males, 3 females) heads of divisions from the district education offices of Al-Gabon, Al-Jafaria, and Bilad Al-Ta'am, in the Governorate of Rayma. This training aimed at providing the participants with the necessary technical skills to use the



computer in their daily work. It included topics such as Windows XP, Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel, and Microsoft PowerPoint, Internet and E-Mail. During the course, the participants practiced working with common computer applications such as the word processing, spreadsheet, presentation software and, additionally, the use of email and familiarity with the Internet. This course contributes to the improvement of the efficiency of the managerial work in the education offices

while creating a solid base for sustainable utilization of Educational Management Information Systems for decision making in those districts. Two similar courses were conducted early this year for the heads of departments in the targeted education offices in the governorates of Amran and Al-Hodeida.

Conducted “Elaboration of Statistical Reports and Diagrams using Excel” for Amran, Rayma and Hodeida Governorates



From April 17 through 22, the project conducted a six-day Educational Management Information System (EMIS) training workshop on the topic of “Elaboration of Statistical Reports and Diagrams using Excel”. The workshop was attended by a total of twenty-three (all males) directors and heads of divisions for statistics and ITC from the targeted education offices in Amran, Rayma and Hodeida. This training workshop enabled the participants to produce quality, well- structured and formatted statistical tables and charts as well

as to be able to calculate relevant educational indicators using Excel functions. Major topics covered during the workshop were a) design, formatting and analysis of statistical tables, b) use of key mathematical and statistical functions for data processing, c) elaboration and formatting of statistical charts and diagrams, and d) printing and protection of worksheets and files. This activity contributes to building a solid base for sustainable utilization of EMIS for decision making and planning in the targeted education offices and, over time, will impact the effective use of resources for improving basic education in Yemen.

Conducted three “Basic Management Skills” Training for Heads of Divisions in the Targeted District Education Offices in Amran, Rayma and Hodeida

From June 5 through 25, the project facilitated a series of three “Basic Management Skills” training courses. Each of these training courses was carried for six-day and targeted seventy-two (70 males, 2 female) heads of divisions from the district education offices in Amran, Rayma and Hodeida. It also included officials from the central ministry. This training aimed at providing the participants with the knowledge and the basic skills that enable them to adhere to the basic management principles and exhibit related skills in their daily work. This course is one of a series of capacity development activities that contributes to the creation of the culture of information-based management and decision making, enabling the heads of divisions to make better utilization of the EMIS data and reports in conducting their managerial responsibilities. The course included topics such as planning, organization, decentralization

and delegation of authority. Other topics covered included communication, motivation, leadership, problem solving, decision making, and team building. The impact of the course on the professional behavior of the participants in their work place constitutes to the follow-up phase of this series of capacity building activities. In the long run, as a result of this type of support by USAID to Yemen, the nation's educators will be making wiser and more effective decisions in the improvement of education at all levels.



IV. Critical Challenges and Statement of Work for the Next Quarter

Critical Challenges

In-country security issues and impact on progress

As emphasized in the previous quarterly report, although travel restrictions for entry of consultants to Yemen are not in effect at this time, security and resultant difficulties and concerns remain a major challenge to the successful implementation of the project. The project staff works within an elevated sense of uncertainty and travel by the Chief of Party is restricted for monitoring and other purposes. The districts in the governorates of Rayma, Hodeida and Amran have not presented any difficulties for movement back and forth by the Yemeni team members and operations could be considered as normal and unaffected by security in the targeted governorates, districts and 58 school communities. This being the case through June 2010, the project leadership and staff, particularly in the field, need to work cautiously and, unfortunately, it appears that security conditions will remain uncertain and might hamper progress in conducting some of the core activities for the remainder of 2010 and LOP.

Investment capacity of recipient communities

The project team in collaboration with the host governorates and districts as well as at the central MOE will need to continue to have and utilize well-founded sets of baseline information including profiles of the communities, schools and institutions in which it is to invest its resources. This is a challenge that the project leadership must face almost daily, certainly at the time of determining the focus and extent of the investments to be undertaken. The “Menu of Interventions for Investments in Sustainable Social and Educational Development,” which was completed this quarter and will be distributed for use by the start of the new school year, should help ensure wise investing of resources at the targeted sites throughout the LOP and beyond.

Meeting demands of the funding agency while addressing beneficiaries’ expectations

The new stabilization-focused strategy of USAID/Yemen and the arrival of new implementing partners present a challenge in that BEST-Yemen will need to continue to think and act more and more as a part of a set of inter-linked development projects. Stabilization of the communities within which the project operates can contribute to the broad Mission of the funding agency through intensified collaboration among the different partners. It may appear as a distraction and, at times, will take precious time and perhaps redirect specific resources; however, it will strengthen the project’s impact and the partners’ collective impact over time. The BEST-Yemen Project has already experienced the consequences of a substantial reduction of funds coupled with the reduced LOP duration by one year; and it will continue to be challenging to meet all reasonable expectations of the beneficiaries regardless of these reductions. Expectations still require modification and sources of funding for some of the well-founded needs not being met by the project may well be considered by the newer projects that are getting started at this time, particularly the Community Livelihoods Project.

Statement of Work for Next Quarter

For the quarter underway at the time of writing this report or July to September 2010, the project will be following closely the plans set forth in the AWP for the year. There will be a collaborative summer program for the targeted school communities, the results of the testing and achievement of the students in the project schools will be reported on and become a part of the records for the project Performance Management Plan. School renovations and constructions of MPCs will be on the agenda with bidding and follow-up activities getting underway in this significant area. Gender equity activities which were accelerated in the 11th quarter will result in training of trainers and the refinement of gender sensitization materials for use in the new school year. Importantly, the technical team will gear up for the start of the 2010-2011 academic year and be challenged by having to do so during the period of Ramadan with effective coordination and collaboration with the MOE at all levels during this period. Of equal importance, EMIS activities will be advanced with the testing and installation of the equipment that has been received to further enhance the ability of the education personnel at the local levels and central MOE to gather and process data for improved decision making. Among other plans for the period of July to September is the need to finalize a scope of work to the planning and implementation of a “Joint Assessment” of the project which is to take place in October 2010. The focus will be on the lessons learned and related areas such as the challenges, ways of enhancing project implementation and others which will serve BEST-Yemen in particular as it plans for the final year of the project. The results are also intended to provide valuable information for the family of new projects funded by USAID/Yemen.

V. Accomplishment Charts

With the closing of activities and, in the 11th quarter, the closing of the offices in Marib and Shabwah, there is no longer the need to present the “Closing Work Plan” accomplishment chart as had been customary in previous quarterly reports. It is recalled the activities in the 77 schools in part of Amran, in Marib and Shabwah where not part of the original BEST-Yemen “Application for Assistance” of December 2007; rather, they were acquired by BEST (EQUIP2) from the previous USAID-funded Basic Education (EQUIP1) Project which ended in July 2008.

What this section does include is the “All Components Accomplishment” matrix in which the accomplishments within the approved Results Framework and AWP 2010 have been updated with, as required, a note of explanation for those that didn’t meet the targets or necessitated modifications based on demands or other factors that justified the changes. The “All Components Accomplishment” chart is presented at the end of this section for the quarter ending on June 30, 2010. It is noted that the “Project Advancement Monitoring Plan” (PAMP) was also updated in the preparation of this report and it will be presented as a separate submission to USAID/Y in early August.