



**Quarterly Report:**

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

**July 1 to September 30, 2010**



**Submitted by:**

**Academy for Educational Development**

*12<sup>th</sup>  
Quarterly Report*

**Submission: October 2010**

## Table of Contents

I. Overview: .....	5
II. BEST Mission and Objectives .....	5
Statement of BEST-Yemen Project Objectives: .....	6
III. Reports for the Quarter, July to September 2010.....	6
Administration and Operations .....	7
<i>BEST-Yemen Project Hosts its 3<sup>rd</sup> Professional Development Retreat.....</i>	<i>7</i>
Technical Reports .....	7
Community Participation .....	7
<i>Supported Twenty Summer Educational Programs in Amran, Rayma and Hodeida Schools.....</i>	<i>7</i>
Gender Equity Activities .....	8
<i>Conducted Gender Sensitization Training for Teacher Trainers from Amran, Rayma and Hodeida.....</i>	<i>8</i>
Training Activities .....	8
<i>Training Packages and Supplementary Educational Materials Development.....</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>Multi-faceted Approach to Safe Schools (MASS) ToT Training.....</i>	<i>9</i>
Adult Literacy Activities .....	9
<i>Conducted Refresher Training for Adult Literacy Facilitators in Hodeida.....</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>LAEO officials Conduct Supervisory Field Visits to Adult Literacy Classes .....</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>Facilitated Life Skills and Awareness Raising Activities in Thula-Amran.....</i>	<i>10</i>
School Renovation Activities .....	10
<i>Hosted Pre-bid Meeting for Phase III, Adding New Multipurpose Community Centers</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>Repaired School Furniture along with Community Volunteers in Targeted Schools in Hodeida .....</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>Finalized Major Renovation in Five Schools in Amran, Hodeida, and Rayma Governorates .....</i>	<i>11</i>
Educational Management Information Systems Activities .....	12

<i>Conducted Educational Planning Training Course for Directors of Directorates from Amran, Rayma, and Hodeida</i> .....	12
<i>Provided Four Districts in Amran and Hodeida Governorates with Basic EMIS Equipment</i> .....	13
IV. Critical Challenges and Statement of Work for the Next Quarter .....	13
<i>In-country security issues and impact on progress</i> .....	13
<i>Investment capacity and significance of the “Menu of Interventions”</i> .....	14
<i>Addressing beneficiaries’ expectations</i> .....	14
<i>Exodus of Project Staff</i> .....	14
<i>Statement of Work for Next Quarter</i> .....	15
V. Accomplishment Chart .....	15

## **List of Acronyms**

<b>AED</b>	Academy for Educational Development
<b>AL</b>	Adult Literacy
<b>AWP</b>	Annual Work Plan
<b>BE</b>	Basic Education Project
<b>BEST</b>	Basic Education Support and Training Project
<b>BEDS</b>	Basic Education Development Strategy
<b>CLP</b>	Community Livelihood Project
<b>COP</b>	Chief of Party
<b>CP</b>	Community Participation
<b>CPF</b>	Community Participation Facilitator
<b>DG</b>	Director General
<b>DCOP</b>	Deputy Chief of Party
<b>DOE</b>	District Office of Education
<b>EMIS</b>	Education Management Information System
<b>FC</b>	Fathers' Council
<b>FDG</b>	Focus Group Discussion
<b>GOE</b>	Governorate Office of Education
<b>GOV</b>	Governorate
<b>GOY</b>	Government of Yemen
<b>LOP</b>	Life of Project
<b>LAEO</b>	Literacy and Adult Education Organization
<b>MASS</b>	Multi-faceted Approach to Safe Schools
<b>MC</b>	Mothers' Council
<b>M&amp;E</b>	Monitoring and Evaluation
<b>MFC</b>	Mothers' and Fathers' Council
<b>MOE</b>	Ministry of Education
<b>MPC</b>	Multipurpose Center
<b>MRT</b>	Mobil Repair Team
<b>PC</b>	Parent Council
<b>PAMP</b>	Project Advancement Monitoring Plan
<b>PDR</b>	Professional Development Retreat
<b>PMP</b>	Performance Management Plan
<b>RGP</b>	Responsive Governance Project
<b>SEP</b>	Summer Education Program
<b>ToT</b>	Trainer of Trainers
<b>USAID</b>	United States Agency for International Development
<b>WP</b>	Work Plan

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

### **I. Overview:**

The 12<sup>th</sup> Quarterly Report for the Basic Education Support and Training (BEST) Yemen Project covers the period from July 1 to September 30, 2010. During this quarter, the project faced several challenges including the heightened security concerns in program implementation sites, transfer of key personnel to the new USAID-funded projects, and the reduced work hours during the Ramadan and Eid holidays. In spite of these challenges, the project accomplished the following noteworthy activities:

- Hosted the 3<sup>rd</sup> Professional Development Retreat (PDR) in Taiz, which was attended by all BEST-Yemen Project staff;
- Supported 20 Summer Educational Programs (SEPs) in Amran, Rayma and Hodeida Schools;
- Conducted Gender Sensitization Training for teacher trainers from Amran, Rayma and Hodeida;
- Developed 2 training packages and supplementary educational materials in Arabic and Science subjects;
- Conducted a series of training events for Adult Literacy inspectors and facilitators;
- Hosted a pre-bid meeting for Phase III of school renovations to introduce the terms and conditions of bidding procedures for the addition of new Multipurpose Community Centers (MPCs);
- Repaired 345 pieces of school furniture with the participation of community volunteers from targeted schools in Hodeida and Rayma governorates;
- Finalized the major renovations of five schools in Amran, Hodeida and Rayma governorates as part of Phase II school renovation work;
- Conducted an Educational Planning Training Course for 24 Directors of Directorates from the Governorates Education Offices of Amran, Rayma and Hodeida, and
- Provided four districts in Amran and Hodeida governorates with basic Education Management Information Systems (EMIS) equipment that are now functioning and support these districts' offices to effectively utilize EMIS applications and tools during and beyond the life of the project (LOP).

### **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, and
- 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 throughout the remaining LOP. 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 complementarity. BEST-Yemen is making every effort to 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, July to September 2010**

This section describes the administrative, operational and technical accomplishments over the 12<sup>th</sup> 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.

## Administration and Operations

### *BEST-Yemen Project Hosts its 3<sup>rd</sup> Professional Development Retreat (PDR)*

From July 15 through 17, the project hosted its 3<sup>rd</sup> PDR for all staff members in Taiz city. The main purpose of this all-staff retreat was: to review the life of project plan and lessons learnt; to provide professional development and capacity building opportunities; to enable staff to exchange technical information, and to develop individual, personal skills and competencies. Major topics covered during the 3<sup>rd</sup> PDR were: a) general overview of the different project components, accomplishments, and success stories; b) review of policies and procedures of AED; c) 2010 Employee Appraisal Review; d) effective coordination of activities between the Hodeida-Rayma Field Office and component coordinators; and d) report writing skills, management techniques and sustainability investments.



## Technical Reports

### Community Participation

#### *Supported Twenty Summer Educational Programs in Amran, Rayma, and Hodeida Schools*



From July 20 through August 9, the project supported 20 Summer Education Programs (SEP) in 20 targeted schools in Amran, Rayma, and Hodeida governorates. These SEPs were organized and coordinated by all project components with Community Participation taking the lead. It targeted over 2,535 students (1,348 males and 1,187 females) and 905 fathers' and mothers' council members (103 fathers, 802 mothers) including adult literacy learners. The main objective of these programs was to strengthen the relationship between the school and the community while creating linkages between summer activities and community needs. These

programs included enhancement classes in Arabic and Math subjects for grades 4, 8 and pre-school students. They introduced a number of life-skills that enabled women and girls to learn new skills such as cooking, sewing, knitting, embroidery, and beadwork to make handbags and clothes for

children and adults. Because of the severely unhealthy living conditions in many of the villages in Amran, Rayma, and Hodeida, families (especially women and children) are vulnerable to illness and disease. Therefore a number of health-awareness-raising programs were incorporated to improve the well-being of these mothers and children. In these SEPs, children (both boys and girls) also had the opportunity to learn new games and sports such as football, basketball, tennis, and chess. These programs ended with a public wrap-up ceremony where distinguished student, teachers, and mothers were honored and an exhibition of handicrafts produced was made available to the entire community and local authorities.

## **Gender Equity Activities**

### *Conducted Gender Sensitization Training for Teacher Trainers from Amran, Rayma, and Hodeida*

From July 31 through August 5, the project conducted a six-day gender sensitization training for 28 teacher trainers (24 males and 4 females) from the governorates of Amran, Rayma, and Hodeida. The training was done using the gender training material developed for teachers and headmasters by the project in the previous quarter. The training was supported by the Deputy Minister for Girls' Education. It provided gender sensitization training, familiarized trainers with gender issues, and increased awareness of negative impact of prevailing gender roles. It also helped familiarize the trainers with the indicators related to building gender-friendly school environment. The training introduced girl-friendly teaching methods to help targeted groups to become aware of the importance of the role of women (mothers) in schools.



Trainers utilized examples from real life experiences and successes generated from the four-year BE Project (2004-2008) and the BEST-Yemen Project. This training was based on the results of the gender disparities noticed in the targeted schools (especially teachers' and headmasters' performance). The trainers are considered now to be a resource at the national level able to assist the project in training 400 teachers and headmasters in targeted schools. It was the first time a gender training of this nature was conducted by the BEST-Yemen Project in collaboration with the Girls' Education Sector of the MOE, where special focus was given to the teaching-learning process.

## **Training Activities**

### *Training Packages and Supplementary Educational Materials Development*

From August 14 through September 16, the BEST-Yemen Project conducted a series of workshops for the development of two training packages and supplementary educational materials. These

training packages were developed by 21 (18 males and 3 females) national level trainers, specialists from the central MOE, and different GOEs. The training materials entail teaching Arabic in a scientific and easy way to enable teachers of grades 1-3 to improve their students' reading, writing,



comprehension, and conversation skills. The packages also contain supplementary educational aids development instructions for science subjects such as physics, chemistry, and biology. The training package offers a comprehensive, readable content, and other appealing features for teachers to assist them in the development of educational materials from locally available resources. The package was developed based on the results of field assessment and focus group discussions conducted in the targeted governorates at an earlier date. The impact of these materials and training will focus mostly on the

cultivation of the teachers' professional knowledge and on the improvement of the standards of teaching and learning across the Yemeni education system.

### *Multi-faceted Approach to Safe Schools (MASS) ToT Training*

From August 28 through September 2, the BEST-Yemen Project conducted a Training of Trainers session for 54 trainers (46 males and 8 females) on the use of the manuals developed under the MASS program activity. Among the participants were representatives of the Training Sector at the Ministry of Education in Sana'a as well as representatives from the governorates of Amran, Shabwah, Hodeida and Rayma. The training was coordinated with Tahseen, a Yemeni contractor responsible for the translation and "Yemenization" of MASS "Doorways" manuals that were used successfully elsewhere in the world by other USAID-funded projects. The main objectives of the training included: introduction of the manuals, addressing details relevant to the training, and reviewing the content for any errors and corrections. All notes and feedback from the training events were collected and reviewed for further refinements. Tahseen incorporated all the modifications and all three manuals are now ready for final printing and follow-up training. The overall goal of this program activity is for schools throughout Yemen to become safer and more conducive to the retention and education of the nation's youth, especially girls.

### **Adult Literacy Activities**

#### *Conducted Refresher Training for Adult Literacy Facilitators in Hodeida*



From July 3 through 15, the project conducted a twelve-day refresher training for 39 adult literacy (AL) facilitators (all females). This activity aimed at providing the facilitators with refresher training of their roles and responsibilities and identified points of strengths and weakness in their performance. Practical methods were discussed so as to resolve any problems that might arise during the teaching and learning process.

### *LAEO officials Conduct Supervisory Field Visits to Adult Literacy Classes*

From July 19 through 27, the Literacy for Adult Education Organization (LAEO) at the district level conducted a series of supervisory field visits to 39 AL classes targeted under BEST-Yemen Project in Hodeida Governorate. These visits were conducted by 8 LAEO officials (4 males and 4 females) in coordination with BEST-Yemen Project staff to assess the AL training outcomes in the field, assess the AL learners' level of understanding and writing skills as well as to find practical solutions to problems and challenges faced by the learners and facilitators. LAEO was very keen to conduct these visits in order to be able to contribute to the sustainability of the AL classes beyond the project.

### *Facilitated Life Skills and Awareness Raising Activities in Thula-Amran*



From July 28 through August 7, the project AL Coordinator facilitated a series of life skills and awareness raising programs for 13 AL classes in Amran. These awareness raising programs targeted 761 female participants in Thula District. The programs focused on personal hygiene and home economics, activities raised by AL learners. The main purpose of these awareness programs was to solve problems faced by women as well as to exchange personal experiences in addressing these and similar cases in future.

### **School Renovation Activities**

#### *Hosted Pre-bid Meeting for Phase III, Adding New Multipurpose Community Centers (MPCs)*



On July 3, the project held a series of pre-bid meetings at the Sheraton Hotel attended by 14 construction engineering firms and 6 monitoring engineering firms that previously had received the bills of quantities, blue prints, specifications and terms of reference for the construction and monitoring of 4 MPCs to be built under phase III of School Renovation program component. This meeting was attended by the BEST Project DCOP, the Chief Architect, and the construction lawyer. In this meeting, the Chief Architect responded to all inquiries raised by the firms regarding the Request for Proposals for the construction and monitoring of the 4 MPCs in Rayma and Hodeida.

#### *Repaired School Furniture Along with Community Volunteers in Targeted Schools in Hodeida*

In July and August, the project's Mobile Repair Team (MRT) repaired a total of 345 pieces of school furniture along with community volunteers in targeted schools in Hodeida and Rayma. The joint community-project activity lead by the project's MRT repaired 227 student double desks in Al Nasr, Al Radad, and 7th July Schools in Hodeida governorate. The MRT continued the

collaborative repair process in other targeted schools in Rayma, adding to its total of repaired double desks an additional 68 with 16 at the Aleid Alfedhi School and 52 at Khaled Bin Al Waleed.



*Finalized Major Renovation in Five Schools in Amran, Hodeida and Rayma Governorates*

In July and August, the project finalized the major renovation works in five schools in Hodeida and Rayma governorates as part of Phase II of School Renovation program component. Initial delivery of these schools to the school communities' receiving committees took place during the first week of July and last week of August. The committees consisted of representatives of governorate offices of education, monitoring engineering firms, renovation subcontractors, the structural assessment firms, school headmasters, local community members, and the BEST Project's Architect. The key representatives of all parties signed the initial delivery and inspection report verifying that the building meets all the required structural criteria. These five schools currently serve 3309 students (1386 males and 1923 females) and with the project's intervention student enrolment is expected to rise.

School renovation work during the report period can be summarized as follows:

- *30 November Main Cluster School (Amran)*
  - Renovation of 16 classrooms, addition of 3 new classrooms, 7 new latrines, teachers' room, administrative office, 2 storage rooms and wall as well as making the school handicap accessible.
- *Abdo Al-Mekhlafi Main Cluster School (Hodeida)*
  - Renovation of 6 classrooms, addition of 4 new classrooms, 6 new latrines, teacher room, administrative office, 2 storage rooms and wall as well as making the school handicap accessible.
- *Al-Ahrar School (Hodeida)*
  - Renovation of 11 classrooms, 4 latrines, addition of 3 new classrooms, administrative office, storage room, 3 new latrines, wall and water tank, as well as rehabilitation of school to be handicap accessible.
- *Khalid Bin Al-Waleed (Rayma)*

- Renovation of 4 classrooms and administrative office, addition of 6 new classrooms, 6 new latrines and wall, and rehabilitation of the school to be handicap accessible.
- *Ateka School (Rayma)*
  - Renovation of 6 classrooms and administrative office, addition of 5 new classrooms, 6 new latrines and privacy wall (fence), and rehabilitation of the school to be handicap accessible.

Abdo Al-Mekhlafi Before Renovation



Abdo Al-Mekhlafi After Renovation



Khalid School Before Renovation



Khalid School After Renovation



### **Educational Management Information Systems Activities**

*Conducted Educational Planning Training Course for Directors of Directorates from Amran, Rayma, and Hodeida*



From July 10 through 15, the project facilitated a six-day training course in “Educational planning” for 24 directors of directorates (all males) from the governorates of Amran, Rayma and Hodeida. The training aimed at providing the participants with the knowledge and the skills necessary to help them elaborate realistic quality educational plans for the development of education in the two districts. Major course topics included introducing the concept and terminology of the planning, the difference between annual, mid- and long- term plans, and

the structure of plans. The steps in developing a plan and requirements to write a five-year plans as well as the projection of the population and enrolment data were also included in the course. Within the expected financial allocations of the education offices, the participants were trained to develop realistic plans that include related activities, responsibilities, timeframe, costs, and a set of indicators to measure the achievement for each of the targets. The impact of the course on the professional practices of the participants in their work place will be determined in the follow-up phase of the capacity building activities. As a result of this type of support, directors are able to elaborate short- and medium-term educational plans and contribute to the improvement of education at the local and governorate levels.

#### *Provided Four Districts in Amran and Hodeida Governorates with Basic EMIS Equipment*

From August 7 through 25, the project provided Amran, Thula, Zabid and Bait Al-Faqieh DOEs with basic EMIS equipment. This equipment is intended to help these districts’ offices utilize EMIS applications and tools. The equipment included PCs, printers, and UPS. The equipment were delivered to the EMIS related divisions and other key offices in the above mentioned districts. The delivery of the EMIS equipment to the remaining targeted districts is to take place within the last quarter of 2010.

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

### *In-country security issues and impact on progress*

Security issues continue to be a major concern in the operation of the project. In some locations, including Sana’a, there is intensification of attacks and resultant police checks when traveling within the city. This will undoubtedly impact the design and implementation of the joint assessment activities scheduled to take place in the next quarter. The project staff continues to work within a sense of uncertainty. Travel by the Chief of Party outside of Sana’a is unlikely in the immediate future in spite of the repeated requests from the targeted populations and a genuine need for monitoring project activities. Program activities and operations in the targeted districts of Rayma, Hodeida, and Amran have not presented any difficulties for the Yemeni team members and there was no negative impact to date in the implementation of program activities. The project leadership will remain vigilant during the 13<sup>th</sup> quarter and the final year of the project, January – December 2011.

### *Investment capacity and significance of the “Menu of Interventions”*

Investing in sustainable development of basic education and support activities like EMIS and adult literacy, the next and subsequent quarters of the project must intensify the involvement of local community representatives, fathers’ and mothers’ councils, education leaders, teachers and other stakeholders in planning, training and the implementation of activities designed to be more focused and site-specific. Only in this way will investment of resources through BEST-Yemen impact the lives of the targeted populations, education system and country as a whole. The baseline information, including profiles of the communities, schools and institutions in which the project is investing its diminishing resources, needs to be fully utilized so as to determine the focus and extent of the investments to be undertaken. As noted in the previous quarterly report, the “Menu of Interventions for Investments in Sustainable Social and Educational Development” must not only be distributed widely among the project stakeholders, it must serve as a training document for increasing the likelihood for optimum return on the project’s investment in time, human and other resources. This key “product” of the project should help ensure wise investing of resources at the targeted sites throughout the remaining LOP and years to come.

### *Addressing beneficiaries’ expectations*

The expectations of the beneficiaries of the BEST-Yemen Project, while realistic at the outset and early years of implementation, cannot all be met given the reduction of one year in the LOP and the cut of 3.1 million dollars. While the new stabilization-focused strategy of USAID/Yemen and the arrival of new implementing partners present a challenge to the project, it can also be seen and used as a “window of opportunity” for the project planners and implementers. Perhaps the reasonable “demands” of leaders in the schools and communities targeted by the BEST Project can be channeled, as deemed appropriate, to the new projects through USAID and, in some cases, other donor organizations would be willing and capable of meeting some of these well-founded requests.

### *Exodus of Project Staff*

As of the writing of this report, two key members of the BEST-Yemen Project’s Management Team and two other staff members have been hired by the new USAID-funded projects. Another member of the Management Team was hired early in the 12<sup>th</sup> quarter by a firm in the private sector. There is reason to believe that other staff will also be departing the BEST-Yemen Project for new projects and the private sector due to the fact that the project will end in December 2011 for all staff and earlier for others as it phases down over the next quarter and final year. This reality poses an enormous challenge in that a gap is appearing that is difficult to fill at least in a short period of time. This increases the workload for all remaining personnel during significant phases of project implementation. Clearly there is a need for coordination and planning of staff transition between the USAID-funded projects so as to have the best professionals occupying positions on the new projects while the BEST Project is still able to continue its essential activities and produce quality deliverables. While this has been addressed to some degree to date, there is room for improvement so as to meet the needs of all involved parties while satisfying the well-founded needs and choices of the pool of professionals under consideration.

### *Statement of Work for Next Quarter*

For the 13<sup>th</sup> quarter or October to December 2010, the project will continue to follow closely the plans set forth in the approved AWP; however, there will be two special activities that will require time and significant attention. The first is the unanticipated project “Performance Audit” to be conducted under the direction of the Regional Inspector General of the USAID. Requests in preparation for this audit have already begun and are being responded to both by AED’s Home and Field Offices. On-site activities begin in mid-October and will continue through early-November. The second special activity is referred to as “The Joint Learned Lessons Assessment” of the BEST-Yemen Project. The purpose of this assessment effort is “to identify the best practices, the lessons learned and the challenges faced by the BEST project in order to inform USAID programming in Yemen. The findings of this assessment should identify the successful methodologies, approaches, and tools of the BEST project with an eye on supporting ongoing and new USAID programming, specifically the two new multi-sectoral integrated USAID projects in Yemen: the Community Livelihood Project (CLP) and the Responsive Governance Project (RGP).” Both of these activities will also feed into the formulation of the AWP 2011 that is to be submitted to USAID/Y by AED on or before the end of the next quarter, December 31, 2010.

### **V. Accomplishment Chart**

The final section of the 12<sup>th</sup> Quarterly Report includes the updated “All Components Accomplishment” matrix 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 September 30, 2010.