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**Project AIDE-Djibouti
Final Report**

Submitted by:

American Institutes for Research

With

**Academy for Educational Development
Save the Children
Juarez and Associates**

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ACRONYMS

AED	Academy for Educational Development
AIR	American Institutes for Research
AIDE-Djibouti	<i>Projet Assistance Internationale pour le Développement de L'Éducation</i>
BC	Basic Competency (related to Djibouti Rocks 3 cycles of basic competencies)
CFPEN	<i>Centre de Formation Professionnelle de l'Éducation Nationale</i>
CGE	<i>Conseil de Gestion de 'L'Ecole</i> (School Management Committee in English)
CP	<i>Conseiller Pédagogique</i>
CR	<i>Conseiller Régionaux</i>
CRIPEN	<i>Centre de Recherche, d'Information, et de Production de l'Éducation Nationale</i>
DEF	<i>Direction de l'Enseignement Fondamentale</i>
DGP	<i>Direction générale de la pédagogie</i>
EFA	Education for All
EQUIP 1	Educational Quality Improvement Program
IR	Intermediate Result
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MENESUP	<i>Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale et de l'Enseignement Supérieur (Ministry of Education)</i>
MOE	Ministry of Education
REDSO/ESA	Regional Development Support Office for Eastern and Southern Africa
SBR	Service des Bureaux Régionaux
TRC	Teacher Resource Center (Centre de Ressources Pédagogique)
UNFD	<i>Union Nationale des Femmes de Djibouti</i>
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Fund
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development

1. BACKGROUND

i) Brief Program Summary

This final report provides a summary of the activities and accomplishments of the Djibouti Assistance to Education Project, also known by its French title *Projet Assistance Internationale pour le Développement de l'Éducation (AIDE-Djibouti)*. The project provided support to an ambitious educational reform program launched in 1999 by the Government of Djibouti to develop a sound national education policy and meet its Education for All goals by 2015. The reform initiative sought to improve the quality of instruction in schools, increase the role played by parents and communities, introduce competency-based approaches to student learning, and strengthen the capacity of private and non-formal systems to reach out-of-school youth, especially girls.

The project was financed by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) through a cooperative agreement signed in June 2003 with the American Institutes for Research (AIR) under the Educational Quality Improvement Program (EQUIP 1). The program was implemented by a consortium led by AIR and partners Academy for Educational Development (AED), Juarez and Associates, and Save the Children.

As prime contractor, AIR managed the program overall and coordinated the work of AED, Juarez and Associates, and Save the Children. AED took carried the technical lead for the project and focused in particular on Intermediate Result 1 (Increased Access to Basic Education) and Intermediate Result 2 (Improved Quality of Teaching and Learning). Save the Children focused on Intermediate Result 3 (Increased Opportunities for Girls' Education and Increased Opportunities for Out-of-School Youth to Non-Formal Education). Juarez and Associates' contributions focused primarily on the project monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system, which included helping the government develop more wide-ranging information gathering and strategic planning tools.

The project was originally designed as a three-year EQUIP 1 activity (from June 13, 2003 to June 13, 2006). USAID provided a funded extension through October 31, 2006 and subsequently two unfunded extensions through February 28, 2007. The objective of the project was to increase access to basic education through improved physical facilities, improve the quality of teaching and learning, and increase educational opportunities for girls in both formal and non-formal settings. Cross-cutting themes included greater community participation and increased use of information and communication technologies in education. All aspects of the project were implemented in close collaboration with the Government of Djibouti, particularly the Ministry of Education (MENESUP), and USAID/Djibouti. The EQUIP1 consortium also benefited from the collaborative exchanges and cooperation of other stakeholders involved in the implementation of project activities.

The project was conceived around three intermediate results established by USAID and consisted of the following types of activities:

Intermediate Result 1: Increased Access to Basic Education

- Carrying out school renovations in collaboration with ministry counterparts and community stakeholders, with a special focus on water, sanitation, and security
- Increasing community involvement in routine maintenance of local schools

Intermediate Result 2: Improved Quality of Teaching and Learning

- Creating a set of curriculum guides for teachers
- Preparing a series of teacher training modules on new pedagogical skills
- Establishing teacher resource centers (TRCs) in selected districts, using computer-based training and materials creation capabilities and internet connectivity where feasible
- Exploring the feasibility of establishing a second national radio channel in Djibouti to carry social messages in support of formal and non-formal education
- Using hardware, software, and training in advanced desktop publishing to assist with curriculum development, materials development, and teacher training
- Developing a handbook and beginning a policy dialogue with ministry officials on professionalizing the role of the school director
- Developing a five-year implementation plan for production of a new curriculum
- Developing computer-based support materials for classroom application
- Establishing interactive radio instruction modules for teaching English in grades 6-9
- Supporting development of a national policy on private schools
- Arranging study tours for MOE staff

Intermediate Result 3: Increased Opportunities for Girls' Education

- Helping the ministry provide incentives for schools to promote girls' education
- Recognizing and promoting female role models
- Assessing the impact of existing non-formal education programs, particularly literacy programs for women and girls
- Helping MENESUP develop and implement a non-formal education strategy
- Organizing literacy study tours and conference opportunities for ministry personnel
- Developing training programs and materials for school-based literacy centers serving women and girls

ii) Brief Program Timeline

2003

- *June:* USAID/Djibouti signs EQUIP1 associate award with AIR.
- *July-September:* start-up activities initiated by the proposed chief of party; initiation of physical reconstruction at two schools.

- *September:* AED fields permanent chief of party.
- *September–November:* design team travels to Djibouti to prepare the detailed design document, budget and the first year work plan; rehabilitation of two urban schools
- *October – December:* Staff hired and office established; detailed design document submitted to USAID; first annual work plan prepared.

2004

- *January:* AIR submits second year implementation plan.
- *January–March:* Limited activities pending approval of the full project budget by USAID/REDSO/ESA.
- *April:* Completion of rehabilitation of sanitary facilities at CES Obock; completion of rehabilitation of all electrical systems at CES Ambouli
- *May:* Project design formally approved by USAID. Projet AIDE participates in World Telecommunications Day and provides 60 computer workstations and peripherals to middle/high schools in Djibouti's four rural districts: Obock, Tadjourah, Ali Sabieh, and Dikhil.¹
- *June–September:* Completion of ministry networking activity involving cabling the headquarters building for a local area network through which staff will have access to shared documents and the internet.
- *July:* Save the Children designs school/community participation and girls' education rapid assessment instruments that are administered in selected communities throughout Djibouti.
- *August:* Save the Children launches the production of the female role models video; development of the English as a Second Language audio program is initiated.
- *September:* Development of a concept paper for a female role models audio-visual presentation; the first set of four female role models was selected, and filming was initiated.
- *October:* School rehabilitation activity to upgrade a primary school to a middle school; first national workshop on quality improvement.
- *November:* Development of the first draft of the Practical Handbook for Teachers; 30 notebook computers handed to inspectors and pedagogical advisors.

¹ See Attachment 4 to this report for a list of recipients.

- *December:* Two national workshops to discuss education quality and introduce the new Handbook, and initiate a schedule of intense follow-up capacity building, especially the new school-based professional development program for teachers; project workshop to promote community participation and non-formal education in accordance with Projet AIDE-Djibouti objectives.

2005

- *January:* Completion or reconstruction work and inauguration of Gabode Middle School.
- *February:* Development and presentation of the first draft of the Teachers' Guide.
- *March:* Start of rehabilitation work of the ground floor of the Ministry of Education.
- *April:* Initiation of a teacher professional development program; project launches an RFP to indigenous NGOs to support projects in literacy, pre-school education and vocational training for girls.
- *May:* Establishment of dormitories at middle schools in rural districts.
- *June:* Enhancement of the Teachers' In-service Training Guide; launch on Djibouti national television of short video spots in four national languages on the importance of giving girls educational opportunities.
- *July–September:* The outline of a legal framework was developed to define the system of grants to PTAs to carry out projects in partnership with schools; workshops on discriminatory stereotypes and gender/equity concepts are initiated for teachers and pedagogical advisors in five districts.
- *July:* Initiation procurement and construction work for district-level Teacher Resource Centers (TRCs) in Djibouti Ville, Ali Sabieh, Dikhil, Obock, and Tadjourah.
- *October:* Launching of a school furniture rehabilitation pilot project; completion of pre-fabricated structures for dormitories at the Tadjourah Middle School.
- *November:* Sharing of the completed Teachers' In-service Training Guide with inspectors and pedagogical advisors in “train the trainers” sessions; completion and inauguration of TRC.
- *December:* Five initial grants to NGOs signed to strengthen non-formal education throughout the country. Communication products and monitoring and evaluation data sets and publications produced by the project team and disseminated to stakeholders.

2006

- *January:* Completion of rehabilitation work on the MENESUP headquarters.

- *February:* Completion of the Teachers' Guide; a week-long training program for school directors carried out in partnership with CFPEN; cataloguing of the Books for Africa.
- *March:* Workshop on the validation of the training guides; workshop session held to help PTA and school directors with school management topics.
- *April:* Consultants from Guinea traveled to Djibouti to work with project staff and MENESUP cadres to develop a legal framework draft, taking into account realities on the ground in Djibouti.
- *May:* Training workshops for 446 teachers in Tadjourah, Obock, Ali Sabieh, Dikhil and Djiboutiville; girls sporting competition and work on a poster campaign to promote the education of girls.
- *June:* Submission of PTA document in final form to the MENESUM Executive Secretariat for validation (still pending). Project is awarded a no-cost extension through the end of November and then through the end of December.
- *July-September:* Termination notices provided to all AED, Save the Children, and Juarez and Associates local staff.
- *October:* Successful study tour to Benin for six ministry officials to observe competency-based training at the primary and middle school levels, with trip report presented to MENSUP on November 15; Departure of chief of party.

2007

- *January:* Staff receive final termination notices
- *February:* End of project

2. PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

i) Program End Date

February 28, 2007

ii.) Status of Completion of Activity Components

Teacher and School Director guides

- In order to strengthen school management, Projet-AIDE developed teacher and school director training guides with procedures and operations manual for school leadership that included the tools necessary for efficient and effective school management. The

Guides were developed by the project's Teacher Training Specialist with the assistance of a short-term consultant.

- The Teacher's Guide was completed and disseminated. Although the School Director's Guide has also been completed and approved, further revisions are needed to make it more practical and user friendly. The applicability of the Guide and modules needs to be tested in the classroom to identify potential difficulties before being produced and the training of trainers begun.

Djibouti Rocks – English Audio Development Project

- The Djibouti Rocks program was conceptualized as an English language club audio program to help sixth grade English teachers in their classes. As such, a new structure for English units and lessons was developed to more closely parallel the textbooks used in middle school English classes. The developed modules were then tested with the Djibouti Rocks students and teachers during recording sessions at CRIPEN's educational radio studio.
- By the end of the project, the Basic Competency 1 (first cycle) CD and accompanying workbook had been completed. The second and third cycle materials were nearing completion. (BC1 and BC2 materials will be completed under EQUIP2.)
- The BC1 materials have been pilot-tested in 40 classes and need to be spread nationally; thus, all sixth grade English teachers will need to be trained as facilitators for these materials in 2007.

Teacher Resource Centers

- Teacher Resource Centers have been renovated and established in each of the five districts as part of an overall strategy to develop sustainable and continuous in-service professional development program for all teachers and schools. The TRCs are meant to serve as a decentralized pole for teacher training and support; and promote professional networking among teachers and schools.
- Although all TRCs have been fully equipped with furniture, computers and peripheral, reference materials, resource materials and supplies, there is no sustainable plan for the maintenance of equipment or the continuous use of the facilities. As such, it is critical that security measures be taken to safeguard the centers, equipment, and materials. Furthermore, operating policies need to be established specifying rules of usage and availability, both to MENESUP personnel and communities in which they are located.

Parent-Teacher Associations

- By the end of the program 90 PTAs were organized, of which 79 were legally registered.

- Efforts to prepare a training guide and legal framework for PTAs were slowed by confusion over their roles vis-à-vis those of the CGEs due to the lack of a policy that clearly defines these roles and responsibilities. As such, the process of finalizing the “Cadre Juridique” is still on hold by the government and the project needs to continue working with MENESUP to revise or recast this legal framework to the satisfaction of the government. Furthermore, Projet AIDE-Djibouti needs to work on revising guides and material, and MOUs for school improvement in order to leave in place a series of practical tools that can be used by MENESUP inspectors and school directors to facilitate school improvement projects.

iii.) Review of Grant Achievements

Projet AIDE’s achievements and successes in education fall into three main areas:

1. Expanding access to education through the rehabilitation of existing schools, including renovating or building water and sanitation facilities and providing school books, equipment, and kits;
2. Improving the quality of education through teacher retraining, development of teacher handbooks and teacher resource centers, and improving teacher supervision and instruction; and
3. Improving community participation in education and increasing girls’ participation in education through community mobilization, support to parent-teacher associations, maintenance of school infrastructure, and providing non-formal education programs for out-of-school youth.

The collaboration between USAID and Djibouti’s MENESUP has resulted in significant achievements since the project began in 2003, for example:

- Rehabilitating and equipping ten schools resulting in enrollment increases of 26 percent in 2005;
- Constructing and equipping teacher resource centers (TRCs) in five Djiboutian cities;
- Developing a 37-module teacher’s guide (*Guide Pratique: Former un Professionnel de l’Enseignement de Base*) that has increased the demand for in-service teacher education;
- Training 18 pedagogic advisors, or *conseils pédagogiques (CPs)*, to provide in-service teacher education using the *Guide Pratique*;¹
- Developing a school director’s guide (*Guide du Maitre*) which will be used by the ministry to professionalize the role of school principal;

¹ Since the beginning of the project, CPs have provided in-service teacher training to 89 percent of the teachers in Djibouti (1,165 out of 1,307).

- Organizing and training 90 parent-teacher associations (PTAs) which in turn supported 30 school improvement projects, eight of which have focused on water and sanitation;
- Collaborating with the ministry in drafting a document that clarifies the roles and responsibilities of local school management committees (“CGEs”) and PTAs;¹
- Providing vocational training and non-formal (literacy and numeracy) education to out of school girls at selected institutions and NGOs such as *l’Ecole Ménagère*, the National Union of Djiboutian Women (UNFD), *Lire, Ecrire et Compter (LEC)*, and *Atu You Fan*²; and
- Developing in conjunction with the Curriculum Development Institute (CRIPEN) a special audio-visual program called “Djibouti Rocks” to provide lessons in English as a second language (ESL) to sixth graders.

The following sections summarize achievements under each intermediate result:

Intermediate Result 1: Increased Access to Basic Education

Projet AIDE directly rehabilitated and improved infrastructure at ten schools. The project directly renovated five schools: Guelleh Batal Primary, Obock Middle School, Tadjourah Middle School, Ambouli Middle School and Gabode Primary school (which, as a result of the renovations was subsequently made into a middle school). The project also helped select five rural schools for the U.S. military to rehabilitate (Waddi, Lahassa, Mouloud, Boubetto and Ali Dadai) and provided \$50,000 for elements that the military was unable to cover, mainly furniture and equipment. For each of these schools the *Projet AIDE* community participation team worked with the PTAs to develop small school improvement projects that were funded with in-kind contributions. Special attention was given to improving sanitary facilities as a way of increasing girls’ participation in education. The project also laid the foundations for dormitories in Tadjourah and Dikhil to help children of nomadic families gain access to school.

PTAs have been formed and trained at 90 of Djibouti’s 99 schools. Thirty school improvement projects have been initiated with the assistance of PTAs, eight of which are focused on water and sanitation. The work of the project’s community participation component has contributed to increased demand for education as well as interest in sustaining the retention and performance of pupils. For example in Calaf, the number of girls who passed the middle school entry exam tripled. This is likely result of the combination of latrine rehabilitation, the production of a small library, and the direct involvement of parents.

¹ The project has also worked with MENESUP to develop a legal framework and training guide that, among other things, has helped PTAs focus on school improvement projects rather than governance, which is the purview of the CGEs.

² A recent pilot project with UNFD showed promise in tying vocational training to job-search skills such as developing resumes and job interview skills.

Intermediate Result 2: Improved Quality of Teaching and Learning

The project planned to produce a set of curriculum guides for primary school teachers in grades 1-5, train teachers in use of the new curriculum guides, and coordinate production of curriculum guides with the production of new student textbooks and the activities of other donors. The project sought to develop computer-based materials allowing teachers to research content and download supplementary teaching and learning materials

- The five teacher resource centers are now fully equipped and for the most part staffed with ministry personnel.
- Under the aegis of the Technical Committee on Quality, whose members include representatives of CFPEN, CRIPEN, the *Service de l'Enseignement de Base*, school directors, and *Projet AIDE*, two comprehensive training guides have been developed for teachers and school directors. Each guide includes a professional development curriculum with support materials in modular form to be used by TRIC/Inspectorate staff to develop locally and context-specific professional development plans for teacher and school director training. The guides have been successfully piloted in Obock and Dikhil and partially piloted in most *inspections*. Feedback from recent CP focus groups, indicate they are beginning to use the guides to support teachers.
- A practical approach to school-based professional development and supervision (*formation et encadrement de proximite*) using the teacher professional development guide has been piloted in Obock and Dikhil. The training activities were fully supported by the inspectors and pedagogical advisors and the teachers. The experimentation provides a concrete illustration of school-based, teacher-centered professional development. Eighteen of Djibouti's 28 Pedagogical Advisors have been trained.
- With help from the project, MENESUP created the Technical Committee on Quality using an open and collaborative approach to initiate discussions and actions to transform Djibouti's approach to teacher in-service training. The committee has also created the beginnings of a common vision of school-based teacher professional development. This is a shift from a mechanistic view of teacher education that stops at the completion of pre-service training to one that understands that professional development should be ongoing during the professional life of the teacher and be closely tied to performance in the classroom as well as linked to a career plan for teachers. Consensus on what constitutes teacher education is an essential building block to creating sustainable and effective teacher development strategies.

Intermediate Result 3: Increased Opportunities for Girls' Education

Projet AIDE succeeded in increasing enrollment and retention of new girl students and encouraging out-of-school girls to participate in non-formal education (NFE) opportunities. The work was accomplished by setting up two grant funds, an NFE grant fund for five NGOs from which 600 beneficiaries (92 percent of them girls) benefited and

a fund for a more extensive activity at the *Ecole Ménagère*. The *Union Nationale des Femmes de Djibouti* (UNFD) has started a project of skills training for out-of-school girls beginning with computer training followed by a course on getting prepared for the job market, e.g. interview techniques and presentation skills.

iv.) Assessment of Implementation Problems

Although Projet AIDE/Djibouti was successful in attaining many of its objectives and establishing good working relationships with the ministry, a number of hindering factors affected program implementation. At the outset, the goals, objectives and expected results of the project were not presented formally to the Ministry and as such, the project met with delays in approvals of documents and some resistance. Furthermore, project objectives and results were not harmonized with those of the Ministry's strategic plan for education, which led to a lack of ownership and further delays in project implementation. However, the development of a more collaborative strategy to work with the Ministry helped alleviate many of the early implementation problems faced by Projet AIDE-Djibouti.

Confusion over the secondment of staff from the ministry was another factor that slowed project activities and implementation. A lack of understanding of the process contributed to bringing activities under IR 3 to a virtual halt for almost two years. The government blamed the project for taking away their staff to work for the project, yet project staff asserted that the government approved and in fact pressured them to do so. As a backlash, it appears the government systematically refused to approve documents related to community participation. Despite its continued delay to approve such documents, the government's public stance maintained strong support for community participation and showed its commitment by quickly approving request of registration by PTAs. Although the situation has not been fully resolved, Projet AIDE, under the direction of Mr. Barnabé Diarra, was able to work more amicably with the Ministry.

In the area of community support, the ministry requested that the project's plan to support PTAs through small grants be suspended due to the lack of a legal or political framework for providing such support to PTAs. This request contributed to delays in the implementation of this component. However, upon the request of MENESUP, Projet AIDE was able to work with two consultants from Guinea to develop a legal framework draft that took into account Djiboutian realities. Following the conclusion of the work and departure of the Guinean consultants the legal framework was thoroughly discussed during numerous séances by Djiboutian cadres especially selected by the MENESUP for the purpose. The document was then submitted for review by representatives of school administrators and their staffs, students, and parents.

During the initial stages of the project, one of the implementing partners experienced a series of delays in the implementation of IR 3. The problem was due to several factors such as administrative issues, including staffing, management, government support, etc. To resolve the situation and address the challenges, an accelerated implementation plan was put in place and a new program director was fielded to Djibouti. The new director was first tasked to develop an alternative plan to achieve project results and focus on activities that could be accomplished by Projet AIDE staff rather than through sub-grants

to NGOs or PTAs. Once the critical situation was redressed, project activities were implemented successfully following the new plan.

v.) Recommendations for Mission Follow-Up and Monitoring Activities

Projet AIDE-Djibouti's interventions under each of the program's three planned intermediate results have been successful in providing support to the Government of Djibouti's education reform program. The project has attained the bulk of its objectives and established an excellent relationship with MENESUP, U.S. Military officials, and all other partners. AIR recommends that USAID build on these achievements and work with MENESUP to develop improved policies and plans to support and sustain innovations that the project has already pioneered in school infrastructure, teacher education, and community participation. The following recommendations are proposed to USAID as follow-on activities:

Intermediate Result 1: Increased Access to Basic Education

- Finalize agreement with MENESUP on a maintenance schedule for renovated facilities
- Help develop and implement strategies to maximize the use of middle school dormitories

Intermediate Result 2: Improved Quality of Teaching and Learning

- Finalize the revisions on the school director's guide and present to technical committee for approval.
- Work with the three departments in MENESUP (CRIPEN, SEP, and CFPEN) to better coordinate and plan their support to in-service training for teachers and school directors.
- Negotiate roles and responsibilities for management and staffing of the TRCs and plan training activities.
- Secure MENESUP commitment for appropriate staffing at TRCs.
- Use the teacher resource centers to implement a decentralized approach to in-service teacher education.

Intermediate Result 3: Increased Equality of Opportunities for Out-of-School Youth, Especially Vulnerable Girls

- Assist MENESUP in finalizing the legal framework for PTAs ("Cadre Juridique") or in developing an acceptable formula to recognize the legal status of PTAs and to continue to register PTAs at all schools in Djibouti.

- Continue to strengthen existing PTAs to work on encouraging girls to attend school and to improve their capacity to implement school improvement projects.
- Refine the training guides and the legal framework for PTAs once a policy is developed.
- Continue to provide support to local communities by providing school improvement action plan projects to renovate or build water and sanitation facilities.
- Help MENSUP develop a national non-formal education strategy, focusing on skills for employability.

vi.) Summary of Lessons Learned

- **Project activities should be closely aligned with those of the Ministry.** It is crucial that activities and interventions be developed through constant interaction with the intended beneficiaries and field partners who are familiar with realities in the field. As such, building a solid partnership to harmonize project objectives and results with those of MENESUP's strategic plan for education is crucial.
- **Project staff must work with appropriate ministry staff when developing training materials to ensure ownership.** Although the guide was developed with education staff, it did not provide support to CFPEN and exists independently of their schedule and plan. Also, teachers were not involved in the testing process and did not feel a sense of ownership.
- **A participatory attitude is necessary to ensure sustainability.** The community participation component encouraged the participation of parents' teachers associations in schools thus increasing demand for education and increasing student retention, as well as giving them a sense of empowerment. The participatory approach has also helped develop a better understanding between PTAs and CGEs.
- **A strategy that addresses the needs of *all* teachers in Djibouti, both rural and urban, needs to be developed.** While the TRCs were built principally to train rural teachers, many of whom are under-qualified, it is still difficult to reach those in very remote areas; at the same time, the Djibouti-Ville TRC does not have the capacity to serve the 68 percent of Djiboutian teachers living in and around the capital city, so additional arrangements will have to be made.
- **USAID must work both with inspectors and with pedagogical advisors.** A strategy needs to be developed to integrate training of principals so that they can serve as school-based instructional leaders and also reinforce what teachers learn at school based in-service workshops. Once the revision of the school director's guide is completed, it will need to be integrated with the teacher's guide to successfully address this challenge.

vii.) Recipient Responsibilities at Phase-Out

Close out procedures were developed by all subcontractors but, at USAID's request, only partially implemented due to the continuation of project activities under EQUIP2. AIR was responsible for the entire close-out process, ensuring rapid but orderly termination of activities. Close-out was relatively straightforward given that project activity was already at low ebb due to the paucity of resources remaining in partners' pipelines and the uncertainties occasioned by prolonged negotiations on the future of the project. The post of Chief of Party was vacant and AED sent an administrative management specialist and a technical consultant to Djibouti to execute the majority of close-out activities in coordination with Save the Children. Close-out activities included: the termination of leases and employment contracts, the payment of severance of all project staff, the development of an inventory of residual non-expendable property and notification to local vendors about project close-out and request for final invoices.

In accordance with the terms of the cooperative agreement, AIR prepared a detailed inventory list to be used for the transfer of project property to the Government of Djibouti. Given the extension of the project, all property has been transferred to the new project under the direction of EQUIP2. By the end of January 2007, all project activities had come to a close and all local employment contracts terminated for local staff of AED, Juarez and Associates, and SAVE, with the exception of two technical specialists, finance managers and cleaning ladies in both the AED and SAVE offices. By the end of February, all local staff was officially terminated and the project office closed while USAID continued its discussions for a possible extension of Projet AIDE.

Cooperative Agreement 623-A-00-03-00040
EQUIP1/Djibouti
Revised Summary Close-Out Program Description
December 22, 2006

I. Introduction

The American Institutes for Research, in association with partners the Academy for Educational Development (AED), Save the Children, and Juarez & Associates, presents this plan--newly revised in accordance with guidance received during a December 20 teleconference--to ensure orderly close-out of the above-referenced EQUIP1 activity in Djibouti by February 28, 2007. The total estimated cost in new funding for this revised plan is \$526,048.

II. Background

In mid-October 2006, USAID requested that AIR prepare a proposal for a 22-month extension of the project with a budget of \$3.0 million. Negotiations ensued in which a series of technical, managerial, and financial options was presented by AIR and its partners. USAID and AIR were unable to come to agreement, however, so on December 14, 2006 USAID announced it was moving to terminate the program and asked that AIR submit a short program description and budget showing this could be achieved by February 28, 2007. That budget is attached.

III. Summary Approach

Close-out of the project will be relatively straightforward as activity is already at a low ebb due to the paucity of resources remaining in partners' pipelines and the uncertainties occasioned by prolonged negotiations surrounding the future of the project. AIR will oversee the entire process, ensuring rapid but orderly termination of current activities; the termination of leases and employment contracts, including the payment of severance to local staff; and the preparation of final technical and financial reports for the project. Given the heavy relatively workload of Save the Children closing out the activities for which they are responsible, local employment contracts for that organization will extend through the end of February 2007 whereas most of those for AED local staff will terminate effective the end of January 2007.

During this close-out transition period, AED and Save the Children staff will carry out selected technical support activities—for example, making minor final revisions to the school director's guide and carrying out modest repairs at teacher resource centers (TRCs) to ensure basic functionality at hand-over—but at a sharply reduced level. At USAID's request, the project will not plan for specific, sustainability-enhancing activities such as the previously-envisioned close-out workshops with the Government of Djibouti.

IV. Disposition of Property

In accordance with the terms of the cooperative agreement, AIR will coordinate the transfer of project property in consultation with USAID/Djibouti and with concurrence of the RAAO on recommended disposition, which will be based on a detailed inventory to be provided to USAID no later than December 31, 2006.

V. Illustrative Timeline

By the end of December 2006

- Summary close-out plan and budget submitted to and approved by USAID.
- Termination notices provided to all local staff.
- Detailed property disposition plan completed and provided to USAID.

By the end of January 2007

- All AED local employment contracts terminated except for Mohamed and Madina, who will stay on through the end of February 2007.¹
- All activities under the project's quality component (teacher training, materials development, "Djibouti Rocks," and TRC support) brought to an orderly close.

By the end of February 2007

- All project activities brought to an orderly close.
- All project property transferred to Government of Djibouti in consultation with USAID.
- Library of project materials developed assembled and delivered to USAID.
- All Save local employment contracts terminated.
- All AED local employment contracts terminated.

¹ Mohamed Farah Omar will be in charge of the office, ensuring that all closeout activities are carried out while Madina, the finance officer, will be responsible for all project related financial matters related to closeout. Office guards will stay on through the end of February to maintain the security of the office until all equipment has been properly disposed. Home office staff will coordinate with both Mohamed and Madina on all closeout activities.