



Knowledge-Driven Microenterprise Development (KDMD)

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Learning and Impact Report

May 13, 2010- May, 14 2011

**Prepared by:
The QED Group, LLC
1250 Eye Street
Suite 1100
Washington, DC 20005**

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Executive Summary

This *Learning and Impact Report* (formerly the Assessing and Learning Report) presents the activities of the different Programs of the KDMD project for the period of May 2010 to May 2011. The report focuses on the lessons learned in the process of planning and implementing the activities, how the KDMD team applied such insights and the impacts that resulted from these changes over time.

The Microenterprise Development (MD) Program continued its suite of seminar series, on-line conferences and other in-person and on-line learning events. Through the MD Program, the KDMD Team improved the Learning Networks with a better support structure. Seminar content availability improved with greater online access of screencasts via the Microlinks platform. Furthermore, the seminar experience was enhanced with increased post-event engagement, including online discussions and speaker blogs.

Greater outreach and communication initiatives by the KDMD team increased the attendance of the Food Security and Agriculture Program seminars over the past year. The development of the Agrilinks platform and increasing availability of content on the site has further expanded the reach of the Program and the diffusion of information from the seminars, which has engendered connections among practitioners and strengthened the agriculture and food security practitioner community. Training courses have also helped to develop USAID's professional networks and to improve knowledge capacity. The team also improved trainings by continuously updating content, structure and process based on participant feedback. The evolution of the case study exercise has better enabled participants to build critical thinking in field interview skills in a more effective format. Facilitation also improved with the inclusion of day and theme leads.

For the Economic Growth (EG) Program, the lessons learned and applied influenced the Introduction to EG Overview, EG Overview, and EG in Post-Conflict courses. Better organization and planning with the presenters streamlined what information they taught and how it complemented the online content. The use of day leads¹ also helped to improve organization and effective content selection. As the team transitioned to a blended learning approach, it successively made online content more accessible to accommodate participant needs and adjusted the workload and timing, which improved the completion rate. The KDMD team also improved communications with the course participants by taking the lead role in correspondence and clarifying pre-course expectations.

This reporting period also saw impacts made in the activities of the comparatively smaller programs. For one, the Europe and Eurasia (E&E) Program deployed the Social Transitions website, improving outreach, and the experience informed the process of developing other Knowledge-Driven International Development (KDID) Portal sites. The Jamaica Program engaged a community of practice despite budgetary uncertainties. For the Office of Development Partners (ODP) Program, the Alliance Officer training course successfully involved 20 participants, and the experience led to recommendations to improve future iterations through clearer role definition and improved content.

¹ A Day lead is defined as a USAID Subject Matter Expert, who can serve as the point of contact with the Core training team to take ownership over the direction of the day, connecting the training team with the speakers for the day.

Microenterprise Development Program

The MD office is the home of KDMD. May 2010 marked the start of the third year on the KDMD project. This year we migrated Microlinks; implemented enhanced seminars; ran the Knowledge Management Impact Challenge; developed training modules; and continued knowledge capture and dissemination through communications and knowledge and learning mechanisms such as Connections and the seminar series.

A. . Synopsis of Activities & Products

Learning Networks

The **Poverty & Conflict** and the **GROOVE** Learning Networks held three meetings this period and these occasions were used to collect information about their progress and support needs. To supplement the information gathered at the workshops, interviews were conducted at mid-term for the GROOVE Learning Network and at the end of the grant for the Poverty & Conflict Learning Network.

The following Learning Networks Surveys & Interviews took place from May 2010 – May 2011

- Poverty & Conflict Mid-term Workshop
- Poverty & Conflict Final Workshop
- GROOVE Mid-term Interview
- GROOVE Mid-term Workshop
- Poverty & Conflict End of Grant Interview

Seminars

The Breakfast and After Hours Seminars hosted a total of 9 and 11 seminars, respectively, during the reporting period. There were 8 Speakers Corner/e-Consultations. The following tables present an overview of all seminars and Speakers Corner/e-Consultation attendance:

Seminars (Breakfast & After Hours) – including webinar & in-person attendance

Breakfast Seminar					
Series #	Series Title	Series Date	Webinar	In-Person	Total
49	First-time Buyers: Facilitating Integration of the Very Poor into Emerging Commercial Value Chains in Liberia	May 27, 2010	24	51	75
50	Beyond the Standard Approach: Evaluating Complex Economic Growth Programs in Fluid Environments	June 17, 2010	42	69	111
51	Facilitating Markets for the Poor: Experiences from the Nigeria PrOpCom Program	July 22, 2010	13	37	50
52	Smallholder Incomes & Food Security: Case Studies from Kenya & Honduras	September 23, 2010	24	72	96
53	Catalyzing Value Chain Development Using Lead Firms: Examples From Ecuador	October 21, 2010	25	44	69
54	Seeds of Change: Behavioral Approaches to Strengthen Agriculture Value Chains	November 18, 2010	42	51	93

Breakfast Seminar					
Series #	Series Title	Series Date	Webinar	In-Person	Total
55	Pathways Out of Poverty: Using Value Chains to Move Vulnerable Households Up the Economic Ladder	January 28, 2011	57	43	100
56	Assessing the Effectiveness of Value Chain Development in India and Zambia	February 24, 2011	36	61	97
57	Making Markets Work for the Poor (M4P): Experience, Results and Lessons from Katalyst Bangladesh	March 24, 2011	82	70	152

After Hours Seminar					
Series #	Series Title	Series Date	Webinar	In-Person	Total
41	Tea and Money: A Study of Customary Finance in Afghanistan	May 12, 2010	15	18	33
42	What Control Groups Can't Tell You: Microfinance and Women's Empowerment	June 9, 2010	36	70	106
43	Rebuilding Haiti: The Critical Role of MFIs and Credit Unions	July 19, 2010	31	56	87
44	Commercialization Amid Conflict: Microfinance Sector Development in the West Bank and Gaza	August 30, 2010	16	33	49
45	What's All the Fuss? Savings Groups, Financial Institutions and the Role of Aid	September 21, 2010	28	37	65
46	Financial Inclusion: Why it's a Hot Topic and What it Means	November 18, 2010	33	37	70
47	Creating Pathways for the Poorest: Lessons Learned from the CGAP-Ford Foundation Graduation Program	December 8, 2010	20	18	38
48	Mobile Banking and Financial Inclusion: The M-PESA Case Study	February 9, 2011	64	50	114
49	Effectively Catalyzing SME Growth Through Business Plan Competitions: Innovative Examples from Latin America	March 9, 2011	48	48	96
50	Migrant-Backed Loans: Mobilizing Remittances in Guatemala	April 7, 2011	35	35	70
51	Is Microfinance Ready for Social Performance Certification?	May 4, 2011	38	35	73

Speakers Corners/e-Consultations

Speakers Corners & e-Consultations (May 2010 - May 2011)		
Title	Date	# Participants
e-Consultation: Integrating Donor-led and Enterprise-led Value Chain Initiatives	June 22, 2010	N/A
Speakers Corner #38: Leveraging Financial Services for Agriculture-Led Food Security	June 29, 2010	130
Speakers Corner #39: Missing Links of	August 17, 2010	80

Speakers Corners & e-Consultations (May 2010 - May 2011)		
Title	Date	# Participants
Business Development in Base of the Pyramid (BoP) Communities		
Speakers Corner #40: Why Integrate Microfinance with Health Services?	October 5, 2010	97
e-Consultation: PPL	October 26, 2010	118
Speakers Corner #41: Strengthening Evaluation of Poverty and Conflict/Fragility Interventions	January 11, 2011	97
Speakers Corner #42: Mainstreaming Gender in Microfinance	February 22, 2011	84
Speakers Corner #43: Cracking the Nut of Rural and Agricultural Finance	April 5, 2011	61

B. Synopsis of Evaluations

Learning Networks (LN)

The Learning Network mid-term and end-of-grant surveys addressed logistics but more importantly addressed progress on learning questions, assessing peer assists, and assessing quality and accessibility of outside experts.

For both learning networks, the peer assists were the most valuable part of participation in the network. This was reflected in comments like, “I very much appreciated the close connection that developed enabling learning and exchange.” This sentiment was echoed in one form or another by seven out of the eight individuals who participated in the workshops and responded to the surveys (18 people participated in the workshops).

Both learning networks had mixed reviews about the quality and quantity of outside experts they obtained access to through the grant activities; less than 50 percent of the respondents found the outside experts adequate for their needs.

Nine grantees were interviewed (one for each organizational member of the Learning Network). The objectives of the interviews with grantees included determining the following:

- The level of collaboration experienced with fellow grantees
- The usefulness of the knowledge created by the learning network (Poverty Conflict Learning Network only)
- The effectiveness of the facilitation support for the learning network

Theme	Response
Level of collaboration experienced with fellow grantees	7 out of the 9 respondents found the collaboration effective.
Usefulness of the knowledge created	4 out of 5 respondents stated that the knowledge

by the learning network	created by the learning network is useful.**
Effectiveness of the facilitation support for the learning network	All respondents expressed that the learning networks could have used much more support in accessing experts and in making more use of their collaborative efforts.

****This self assessment of the usefulness of their product will be assessed through independent means in the next reporting period.**

Seminars (Breakfast & After Hours)

Both seminars are consistently well-attended and both series have also been consistently rated above average in terms of subject matter interest and presenter knowledge.

Breakfast Seminars

260 participants out of 843 answered the evaluation survey for all the Breakfast Seminars during this reporting period, representing a response rate of 32 percent. However, not all surveys were fully completed; for individual survey questions, the response rate ranges from 172-260.

(Q.1) Type of Organization	Valid Percent	Valid N
NGO	37.7%	98
Private Sector	26.5%	69
Independent	12.3%	32
USAID	11.9%	31
University/Think Tank (this includes students)	5.4%	14
Other Federal Government Agency	3.1%	8
Other Donor	3.1%	8
Total	100.0%	260
(Q.2) Location of Work	Valid Percent	Valid N
Washington, DC	76.1%	194
Other U.S.	10.6%	27
International - Development Program Host Country	8.6%	22
International - Non-U.S. Donor Country	4.7%	12
Total	100.0%	255
(Q.3) Number of Years in International Development (Grouped)	Valid Percent	Valid N
Less than 5	61.0%	105
6 - 13	19.8%	34
14 - 21	10.5%	18
22 - 29	2.9%	5
30 - 37	4.7%	8
More than 38	1.2%	2
Total	100.00%	172

Of the survey respondents who attended the Breakfast Seminars in-person or online, most work in Washington, DC and represent an NGO or the Private Sector. Additionally, the majority have less than five years of international development experience.

Extent to which the following applied to the participants:	Strongly Agree (5)	Agree (4)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)	Valid N
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The subject matter interests me	160	61.8%	61	23.6%	9	3.5%	11	4.2%	18	6.9%	259
The subject matter is important to my work	148	57.6%	59	23.0%	19	7.4%	14	5.4%	17	6.6%	257
I can apply what I learned to my work	92	35.9%	100	39.1%	39	15.2%	10	3.9%	15	5.9%	256
This was an effective format	88	35.3%	103	41.4%	32	12.9%	10	4.0%	16	6.4%	249
The presenter was knowledgeable	111	62.7%	56	31.6%	8	4.5%	2	1.1%	0	0.0%	177

The positive rating from the respondents is a good indication that the Breakfast Seminar series has selected topics that are interesting and germane to the international development practitioner community and that are presented by knowledgeable speakers with expertise in the field. In addition to the quantitative feedback, the A&L team also gathers qualitative feedback from the participants for each activity based on the following two questions:

- Do you have any suggestions for future topics or activities?
- Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

The suggestions for future topics are not collected for evaluative purposes but are shared with the activity manager. A future exercise for the A&L team could be to compare seminar subjects against previous suggestions to determine how much participant suggestions influence the seminar offerings.

Most suggestions for improvements center around improving the webinar experience around video and audio quality. There are also numerous requests to have easier access to presenters' PowerPoint presentations. Some suggestions were helpful to the webinar facilitation team, while other persistent suggestions, such as getting access to presentations before the event, are unrealistic.

After Hour Seminars

Of the total 801 participants in the After Hours Seminar in this reporting period, 259 responded to the evaluations, at a response rate of 32 percent. For individual questions, the response rate ranged from 92-259 participants. The results of the participant feedback can be found below:

(Q.1) Type of Organization	Valid Percent	Valid N
NGO	52.0%	90
Private Sector	20.2%	35
Independent	9.2%	16
USAID	7.5%	13
University/Think Tank (this includes students)	5.8%	10
Other Federal Government Agency	3.5%	6
Other Donor	1.7%	3
Total	100.0%	173

(Q.2) Location of Work	Valid Percent	Valid N
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Washington, DC	76.2%	128
Other U.S.	16.7%	28
International - Non-U.S. Donor Country	4.2%	7
International - Development Program Host Country	3.0%	5
Total	100.0%	168

(Q.3) Number of Years	Valid Percent	Valid N
Less than 5	45.6%	118
6 - 14	27.4%	71
15 - 23	13.1%	34
24 - 32	10.4%	27
33 - 41	2.7%	7
More than 42	0.8%	2
Total	100.00%	259

The majority of the participants work in Washington, DC in the NGO sector. Additionally, for the participants who have attended the After Hours Seminars in-person or online, most have between 5-14 years of international development experience.

Extent to which the following applied to the participants:	Strongly Agree (5)		Agree (4)		Neutral (3)		Disagree (2)		Strongly Disagree (1)		Valid N
The subject matter interests me	97	55.7%	35	20.1%	3	1.7%	6	3.4%	33	19.0%	174
The subject matter is important to my work	76	43.9%	41	23.7%	20	11.6%	14	8.1%	22	12.7%	173
I can apply what I learned to my work	50	29.2%	54	31.6%	37	21.6%	18	10.5%	12	7.0%	171
This was an effective format	60	34.9%	54	31.4%	19	11.0%	17	9.9%	22	12.8%	172
The presenter was knowledgeable	59	64.1%	27	29.3%	4	4.3%	1	1.1%	1	1.1%	92

**Majority of responses are in red*

The majority of the respondents reported to strongly agree with the following statements:

- The subject matter interests me
- The presenter was knowledgeable

However **20.8%** of respondents disagreed with the statement: “The subject matter is important to my work” and **17.5%** of respondents disagreed with the statement: “I can apply what I learned to my work”. A closer look at the survey data showed that most of the respondents who fell into the above mentioned categories worked for NGOs and/or had less than five years of experience in international development. One possible explanation for these results is that over half of the people who had less than five years of experience work for NGOs and these participants may not have enough technical

knowledge and experience to benefit from the seminars. This could benefit from further investigation by A&L and the MD Program teams.

As with the Breakfast Seminars, participants are asked for suggestions for future topics or activities and suggestions for improvements.

Speakers Corners/e-Consultations

The total number of participants who completed the online evaluations for all the Speakers Corner and e-Consultation activities *range between 0-17 participants*.

Speakers Corner & e-Consultation (May 2010 - May 2011)		
Title	Date	# of Responses for Surveys
e-Consultation: Integrating Donor-led and Enterprise-led Value Chain Initiatives	June 22, 2010	0
Speakers Corner #38: Leveraging Financial Services for Agriculture-Led Food Security	June 29, 2010	17
Speakers Corner #39: Missing Links of Business Development in Base of the Pyramid (BoP) Communities	August 17, 2010	3
Speakers Corner #40: Why Integrate Microfinance with Health Services?	October 5, 2010	7
e-Consultation: PPL	October 26, 2010	10
Speakers Corner #41: Strengthening Evaluation of Poverty and Conflict/Fragility Interventions	January 11, 2011	9
Speakers Corner #42: Mainstreaming Gender in Microfinance	February 22, 2011	2
Speakers Corner #43: Cracking the Nut of Rural and Agricultural Finance	April 5, 2011	3

The low response rate to the surveys is attributed to two factors: the speaker's corner survey was several pages long and the survey was sent either through the Microlinks system after the event or through Mailchimp, never through both mechanisms.

The A&L team worked with the Speaker's Corner activity manager to streamline the survey it was cut down from four pages to one page and the new survey will be used in the coming project year. In the coming project year the survey will be sent through both channels (Microlinks and Mailchimp) to maximize response rates.

C. Lessons Learned and Applied

Learning Networks

One of the most valuable outcomes of the learning network model as implemented by KDMD is the peer assist and the collaboration between grantees as experienced by the grantees. KDMD needs to put mechanisms in place to better quantify this outcome.

Seminars

Most of the lessons learned from the seminar series centered on the webinar experience. Participants wanted:

- More information about the presenters
- Access to the PowerPoint presentations
- More time to get their questions answered
- A way to continue the dialogue after the seminar

The KDMD team responded by:

- Incorporating slides with speaker bios and headshots into the webinar
- Implementing “enhanced” seminars which included
 - blog posts by speakers and guests,
 - posts of questions which were unanswered during the seminar with the presenter’s responses,
 - post-event emails with links to the presentations, blogs, surveys, short videos interviews with the speakers, and webspace where comments and questions can be posted and addressed

Speakers Corners/e-Consultations

The nine Speakers Corners consistently got kudos through anecdotes. Among the lessons learned this year were:

- It is important to set participant and facilitator expectations for e-Consultations to help focus discussions towards specific goals.
- Engaging with facilitators based overseas requires an increased level of effort at the planning stage and highlighted the importance of having very specific time requirements to ensure that the facilitators were available when participants expected them to be online.
- E-Consultations can be very effective tools as a part of a series of events , for example using them to set up agendas for larger events or promoting other KDMD activities.

D. Impact of Improvements

Learning Networks

Results of the interview helped to improve the support structure for the GROOVE Learning Network for the remaining grant period.

The learning networks present a unique opportunity to improve knowledge about learning and collaboration; there are currently no measures in place within the KDMD project to monitor and measure this adequately. This will be a priority in the next year.

Seminars

The enhanced seminars gave a larger number of people access to screencasts as well as access to speakers though follow-on activities such as a longer question and answer period on the Microlinks website. This new activity needs to be further assessed in the coming year to determine how many more people access screencasts, videos, and blogs.

Food Security and Agriculture Program

Over the last year, the Bureau for Food Security and Agriculture (BFS) Program has promoted the exchange of knowledge and learning amongst USAID staff and partners through a range of techniques with the goal of improving the effectiveness of USAID agricultural and food security investments. Specific products during this reporting period include 18 seminars and webinars, curriculum development and implementation of 4 trainings, production of 8 technical resource documents, and increasing online knowledge dissemination through the development of the Agrilinks platform.

Participation in the seminar series increased as the KDMD project took over promotion and mailing lists and introduced a webinar component. Participant feedback and anecdotal evidence show that the seminar series is relevant and applicable to practitioners' work.

All the trainings were newly developed; they included three sessions of the USAID Ag Overview Course for new hires and the piloting of the Agency's first Ag Core Course for mission staff engaged in agriculture programs in the field in over 20 years. The trainings reached over 100 practitioners and new hires and consistently received above average ratings from participants in terms of relevance of the topics, applicability of the materials, and content quality.

The activities generated by this Program have been well received and have not only improved the dissemination of technical knowledge but have also enabled more interaction and knowledge sharing between BFS staff based in Washington, DC and Mission staff.

This section summarizes the activities of the BFS Program over this last year and will explain the evaluation process, lessons learned, subsequent improvements, and impacts.

A. Synopsis of Activities & Products

During the May 2010-May 2011 reporting period the Food Security and Agriculture team:

- Facilitated a total of **19 seminars and webinars reaching USAID staff in Washington and Missions, implementing partners, and other agriculture practitioners;**
- Coordinated curriculum development and implementation of **4 agriculture trainings for new hires as well as established agriculture staff in the field at USAID;**
- Co-authored and managed the production of more than **8 technical resource documents targeted at Mission field staff and implementing partners including the *Integration of Gender into Agriculture Program Technical Brief Series;***
- Launched a **new online knowledge sharing platform open to all agriculture practitioners, Agrilinks.org;** and,
- Hosted the first online AgExchange discussion.

Seminars

Activities (May 2010 – May 2011)	Total
BFS Seminars	19
Ag Sector Council Seminars ²	11
Feed the Future - Civil Society Outreach Stakeholder Meetings ³	5
Ag Exchanges	1
Special Seminar: Food Security Symposium III	1
Special Seminar: Pedro Sanchez ⁴	1

The Ag Sector Council is a USAID initiative that has evolved since February 2009. The monthly seminars are held at USAID and the primary target audience is USAID Washington staff and Missions. The seminars are also open to other organizations and USG entities. KDMD began implementing these events in March 2010, introducing the webinar component of the seminar, which enabled participants to attend the event remotely. This innovation facilitated access to these professional development seminars for USAID Missions and partners based in the field, enabling an enriched dialogue and real-time exchange with in-person participants. In addition, the capture of these seminars in the form of screencast resources and promotion through KDMD websites allow users long-term access the products after the real-time event is over.

The Feed the Future (FTF) Civil Society Outreach (CSO) stakeholder meetings are a more recent initiative, taken over by KDMD in January 2011. Prior to January, these meetings were held via teleconference. As with the Ag Sector Council, KDMD helped extend the reach of these seminars and supported the generation and capture of knowledge by providing a space for people to attend the seminars and using webinar technology to allow participation by interested parties around the world to listen in and participate. This monthly seminar differs from the Ag Sector Council seminars in its focus and target audience. The FTF CSO seminars are primarily targeted at civil society organizations and NGOs to provide a vehicle for a consultative process among key stakeholders on a specific topic or issue pertinent to the Feed the Future Initiative.

This reporting period also saw the first Ag Exchange (Integrating Climate Change and Natural Resource Management into FTF) on the new Agrilinks platform, agrilinks.kdid.org. This was a facilitated discussion that took place over the course of two days with eight facilitators (four on each day). This activity provided good early exposure to the new Agrilinks website (more discussion about the evolution of Agrilinks is provided in section C below). The Program anticipates implementing other Ag Exchanges,

² Surveys for the Ag Sector Council Seminars were administered beginning in April 2010.

³ Five seminars were supported but surveys for the FTF CSO Stakeholder Seminars were administered beginning in February 2011; thus there are surveys for four out of five seminars.

⁴ This was a one-time event. The Program does not anticipate implementing another special seminar.

with the goal of offering these online activities on a quarterly basis. They provide a vehicle for USAID Washington staff, USAID Mission staff, implementing partners, and other agriculture practitioners to exchange knowledge and share perspectives on important cross-cutting issues.

In the fall of 2010, KDMD’s Food Security and Agriculture team led the development and production of a series of Gender & Ag Briefs available on Agrilinks. The production of the briefs culminated in their public release at the February FTF CSO seminar on Gender Integration into Agriculture and FTF, reaching USAID and civil society practitioners. The successful dissemination of the briefs at the event highlighted the benefit of combining KDMD activities for maximum impact and the importance of using activities to promote resources .

Trainings

The table below lists the four Ag courses that were delivered during this reporting period, three of which are different iterations of the same course offering. The Ag Overview Course is a 2-day course primarily targeted at Development Leadership Initiative members (DLIs) and other new USAID hires. The Ag Core course is a 5-day course targeted at USAID mission staff in the field engaged in Ag programs. This course was designed and delivered for the first time under the Food Security and Ag Program in December 2010. The course was developed as the new Bureau for Food Security was conceptualized, and implemented shortly after its creation. The lessons learned and improvements made from each course to the next iteration are summarized in section C and D below.

Course Offerings (May 2010 – May 2011)	Total
Agriculture	4
Short Course (May 2010)*	1
Overview Course (September 2010)	1
Core Course (December 2010)	1
Overview Course (March 2011)	1

**Later renamed Overview Course*

B. Synopsis of Evaluations

Seminars and courses are evaluated through the following feedback mechanisms:

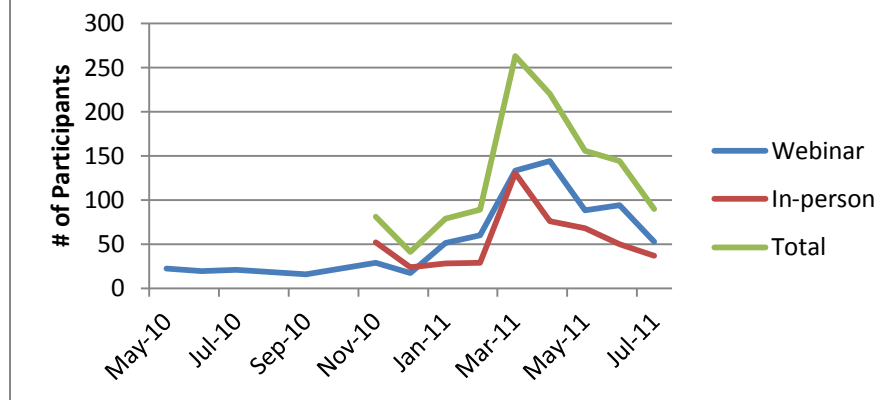
- Participant Feedback (Activity Assessments and Course evaluations)
- Implementer/USAID Feedback (After Action Reviews and debriefs)
- Presenter Feedback (separate surveys and interviews)

Seminars

The chart below shows the total attendance (webinar and in-person) for Ag Sector Council Seminars during this reporting period.⁵

⁵ There were no Ag Sector Council Seminars in August and October 2010. **Only webinar attendance** stats are available May - September 2010.

Ag Sector Council Seminar Attendance (May 2010 - May 2011)



Attendance substantially increased when the KDMD project took over the mailing lists and the task of advertising and inviting people to the seminars in the first quarter of 2011. The peak attendance in March 2011 was the result of a partnership of the KDMD team with several NGOs, enabling outreach beyond the BFS mailing list to include the larger network represented by the NGOs. The decline in attendance in the summer months may be because many practitioners take vacation during that time – this assumption will have to be revisited when the series starts again in September 2011.

From February to May 2011⁶ the FTF CSO Stakeholder seminars consistently drew a webinar audience of 130 or more – this due primarily to the extensive mailing list KDMD built for the BFS seminars (see section D) and the convenience of webinars. The in-person attendance for the seminars averaged 56 per seminar for the series.

Feedback from seminar participants was obtained primarily through Activity Assessments. Three data points were used to gauge participant perception of the usefulness of the seminars and to obtain suggestions for future seminars. Below are the aggregated responses for both seminar series. For both seminar series, over **75 percent** of respondents agreed the subject matter was important and applicable to their work. However 13.5% of participants state that they cannot apply what they have learned to their work – a closer look at the responses show that over **20%** of survey respondents who work for USAID fall into that category – further analysis of the data and of the seminar offerings will be done to find out more about the reasons behind this as USAID is the primary target of these seminars.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Valid N
ASC Seminars						
The subject matter is important to my work	53%	26%	7.3%	4%	8.7%	369
I can apply what I learned to my work	32.6%	34.8%	19.1%	6.6%	6.9%	362

⁶ Attendance figures are not available for the January FTF CSO seminar.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Valid N
FTF CSO						
The subject matter is important to my work	59.9%	33%	5.6%	1.1%	0%	177
I can apply what I learned to my work	36.6%	38.3%	23.4%	1.7%	0%	175

Trainings

Feedback for each course offering was obtained through daily course evaluations. Participant feedback assessing whether sessions were informative and relevant to their work (1=Strongly Disagree and 5=Strongly Agree) is provided in the table below.⁷ These figures suggest that participants viewed both courses as important and practically relevant overall.

	Informative	Relevant to Work
Ag Overview Course (Average of all sessions May 2010-May 2011)	3.98	4.07
Ag Core Course (Average of all sessions in December 2010 event)	4.27	4.21

Feedback from the course implementers (the KDMD BFS team, Training Resources Group (TRG), the USAID activity manager, and BFS colleagues) supplemented the survey results. This feedback was collected in the After Action Reviews (AARs) as well as through informal conversations to delineate lessons learned and identify improvements to future activities.

C. Lessons Learned and Applied

Seminars

- Outreach was improved by having professional looking invitations and better maintenance of the BFS mailing list.
- At the suggestion of the K&L team, Speaker Bios and headshots were included in the presentation slides for the webinar audience. This improved the webinar experience for participants as it gave them deeper context on the subject matter and the speaker's experience on the subject. This innovation started with the Ag Sector Councils and is being rolled out to other KDMD Seminar series.
- Providing an introduction slide at the beginning of the event for the webinar participants keeps them engaged as the event geared up.
- Moving the venue of the FTF CSO seminars to outside USAID's offices has made it accessible to a wider audience; the venue is more accessible to people who want to participate in person and allows the KDMD team more control of multimedia options such as the webinars.
- The team has begun to archive resources online for long-term access.

⁷ The BFS training team reviews all participant feedback thoroughly during debriefing sessions following each of these courses and endeavors to apply some of these suggestions for future course offerings. However, it is not always feasible to accommodate these suggestions due to various programmatic constraints and challenges.

- Overall branding, consistency, and quality of communications with participants has been improved.
- By offering seminars as part of a set (i.e., Natural Resource Management and FTF) over three platforms (Ag Sector Council, FTF CSO, and Agrilinks), the BFS Program was able to increase participation.

Technical Briefs Targeted at USAID Mission Staff

Integration of Gender into Agriculture Programs (Aug 2010- Feb 2011)

- Outlining the series title and all of the series briefs at the beginning was useful for ensuring they were well linked but not overlapping in their messaging and content.
- Reviewer feedback indicated that solid timeframes and a system to alert reviewers are very important. It was useful to have core reviewers and for future technical briefs it will be useful to identify special reviewers by brief (e.g. a finance or a land specialist).
- Regarding branding/design, it was critical to get the information needed for branding, crediting, and all of the language up front. The team learned that this needed more time than initially allowed. Now the team has a list of basic information that needs to be collected ahead of the template design.
- KDMD developed a process that included the Portfolios and Programs for developing content, incorporating reviewer feedback, copy editing, layout, and branding that was not in place before.
- The briefs were widely disseminated and are available on the Agrilinks website. However, in the future, a promotion/dissemination plan should be developed at the onset.

Agrilinks

Over the course of the past year, a key accomplishment has been the continuous evolution of the Agrilinks concept from a single page on Microlinks to a page on KDID and finally to a dedicated beta website Agrilinks.org. Some key lessons learned and resulting improvements from this process include:

- Meeting initial demands before increasing functionality with increased content was an effective growth strategy.
- Utilizing existing resources of KDMD (including platform design, scoping work, wireframes, etc.) developed for other parts of the project (especially Microlinks and KDID) streamlined the process and avoided duplication of resources.
- Setting goals, benchmarks, and timelines are important as KDMD establishes Phase I and II of Agrilinks to ensure sustained functionality in line with the overall goals and vision of the site and the Program.
- Defining clear roles for the KDMD team and USAID early on for direction and maintenance of the online spaces is crucial. Discussions to have a site manager and to refine all roles became increasingly important in April/May 2011 as a full website was established. The team is recommending a site manager to lead coordination on this activity within the Program and project.

Ag Exchange (May 2011)

One of the first opportunities for participants to interact on the new Agrilinks site was the Ag Exchange. The following highlights key lessons learned and resulting changes for this activity:

- It was useful to connect the AgExchange with the Climate Change Integration Series. Future AgExchanges should consider this type of alignment to build participation by utilizing the organizations and networks associated with the topics/activities.
- Having facilitators from the field and USAID built ownership and voice to the discussion outside of Washington, DC. The team recommends balancing partners in planning future AgExchanges and defining the objectives and purpose of the online discussion.
- Developing a plan for the e-Consultation synthesis document needs to happen up front and should also include a plan for disseminating and sharing with facilitators, organizers, and participants after the fact. It could be useful to consider communities of practice that might link to this resource.
- Increased engagement and more agriculture and food security technical discussion should be considered in shaping these events to align the networks involved in the discussion with the content addressed. KDMD and USAID need to be active in these networks to increase interest and participation from diverse groups.
- The KDMD team needs to improve capacity further to train facilitators, manage activities, and to support participants in troubleshooting challenges they might have with the website during the e-Consultation. Discussion is underway to build this capacity within KDMD and increase USAID's exposure in facilitating through additional AgExchanges in the future.

Trainings

The team identified and applied the following lessons learned from each of the course offerings in terms of **content** and **process**, resulting in improvements to subsequent iterations of the course during this reporting period.

Ag Overview Course

Content

After the May 2010 offering, the course was renamed and the objectives were revised to correspond more closely with what the BFS team wanted participants to learn and to allow organizers to focus on what participants need to know to support projects effectively; a better approach than overviews of various USAID bureaus and partners. The course objectives were refined to: (1) Describe key challenges, priorities, and successful approaches in USAID agriculture sector programming; (2) Identify and assess programming options for agriculture-led development in different country situations and for various emerging issues; and (3) Know what questions to ask and where to go for information on agriculture program design.

Each iteration of the overview course informed the next course; below is a list of improvements made for each iteration:

September 2010:

- The two bureau panel presentations (Regional Bureau and Pillar Bureau sessions) were combined into one panel session using “Speed learning.”⁸ This eliminated the overlap between the sessions and in presenters.
- The Food Security and Agriculture team determined that the emerging issues panel had too much content and might be better achieved through focusing on one issue and utilizing the screencasts of the other issues ahead of the course to complement the content. To this end, the team shared online resources with participants prior to the course around two emerging issues with the aim of allowing more focus on nutrition during the in-person training. This provided an important vehicle for connecting participants to a range of online resources available at the first iteration of the Agrilinks online space.⁹ Furthermore, this achieved the aim of having more focused time for nutrition and agriculture linkages session during the course.
- Reducing the number of partners on the partner panel allowed more time for each participant across the panel.

The following improvements were applied for the March 2011 Ag Overview course:

- The course continued to use online screencasts and focus on nutrition during the in-person training around the core issues.
- A new session was piloted called “Complex Issues in Agriculture Program Design.” This focused on two relevant field-based issues that participants encountered in the case study.¹⁰ Based on participant feedback, the training team concluded that it would be beneficial to re-work the session to more closely align with the program design objectives for the case study and re-work the key takeaway messages. These changes will be applied to the next Ag Overview course.

Process

Case Study

From the first implementation of the Ag Overview course, the case study provided a very useful opportunity to apply concepts learned during the training. After the first iteration of the course, it became clear from KDMD organizers and facilitator feedback that the case study format needed to be revised. In September 2010, the case study was consolidated into one day instead of spread over different sessions over two days. Other revisions made in September included the addition of an improved learning methodology in which participants formed groups and interviewed key stakeholders during role-play sessions to collect information needed to complete the case exercise. A further refinement of the case study in March 2011 built on the September improvements by requiring active participation from all trainees; this was achieved by having each group select one representative to

⁸ Speed learning for this course is defined as participants moving between different sessions.

⁹ At the time, the Agrilinks space was a page on Microlinks with screencasts of recent agriculture sector councils and training resources.

¹⁰ The issues were Investing in favored vs. less favored geographic areas; Balancing different economic and vulnerability criteria; and How to approach sustainability in agriculture programs.

interview a particular stakeholder and report to his/her group. As a result, all members of a particular group took full part in the activity, resulting in richer discussions.

Integration of Ag Sector Orientation Half Day

USAID conducts an internal half-day Ag Sector Orientation for its new hires. In May 2010, this was implemented directly leading up to the Ag Overview Course but wasn't coordinated or implemented with KDMD. There was a sense from participants and KDMD organizers that impact could have been improved if the two events were either aligned or separated more completely. In March 2011, BFS and KDMD decided to make an online module out of the Ag Sector Orientation making it possible for participants to complete the orientation before the Overview Course. This eliminated the need for a stand-alone training, provided enhanced coordination between it and other trainings, and strengthened conveying key objectives to participants across training activities.

Ag Core Course

The first Ag Core course was given in December 2010. Feedback from BFS, the participants, and the trainers led to a refinement of the course objectives to address the need to focus on integration. Revising the course objectives not only led to increased attention on integration but also put emphasis on BFS's aim of creating a community of USAID agriculture practitioners. This was very helpful in clarifying what the Ag team expected participants to get out of the course; the revised objectives will guide the development of the June 2011 iteration of the course. The table below compares the old and new objectives for the course.

Revisions to Course Objectives: Ag Overview Course	
December 2010	June 2011
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To assist field staff in understanding USAID's new visions for agriculture in economic growth and food security programming. 2. To promote effective assessment, prioritization, and design of agriculture and food security programming. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To understand the expanded role of agriculture in economic growth and food security. 2. To develop skills to integrate other sectors into agriculture and food security. 3. To understand sound agricultural program implementation through sharing of key technical approaches and lessons learned. 4. To strengthen a technical agriculture community of practice by capturing and sharing knowledge.

Content

Several recommendations were made on refining the content of the Ag Core Course to be implemented in June 2011:

- Plan separate sessions on integration topics: gender, nutrition, and climate change.
- Increase time for the Game of Life activity.
- Revisit session content and framework for Agriculture Productivity day as well as the Markets/Value Chains day (which included increased attention to the enabling environment around the markets and value chains).
- Significantly rework several sessions that will be carried over from the December course.

Process

Curriculum Development Process

- **Defined and piloted USAID core training team and day lead roles and involvement to provide input and USAID ownership into the KDMD curriculum design process.**
 - Built ownership and provided KDMD agriculture and food security technical expertise and adult learning and training expertise.
- **Suggested modifications for the second iteration to include integration leads** in addition to day leads focused on: making ag-led growth more inclusive, markets/enabling environment, and agriculture productivity.
- **Created curriculum development process involving USAID day leads, USAID and external session presenters, and KDMD technical experts.**
 - This has generated many suggestions for the next iteration that will be implemented in June 2011 concerning processes that could be streamlined.

Case Study

- **Picked a real country, which was well received and more useful from a learning perspective.**
- **Found that using the case study as a way to apply the content presented throughout the week was particularly challenging during this pilot as the case study and sessions were being developed at the same time.**
 - Having someone that was dedicated to coordinate with the various day leads and sessions helped a lot. Moving forward this will be easier but will still require additional attention to ensure linkages.
- **Suggested significant revision to the case exercises, timing, and distribution throughout the week to enhance participant experience and maximize application opportunities from the concepts earlier in the week** (primarily focusing on the last day and not doing one small activity each day).

D. Impact of Improvements

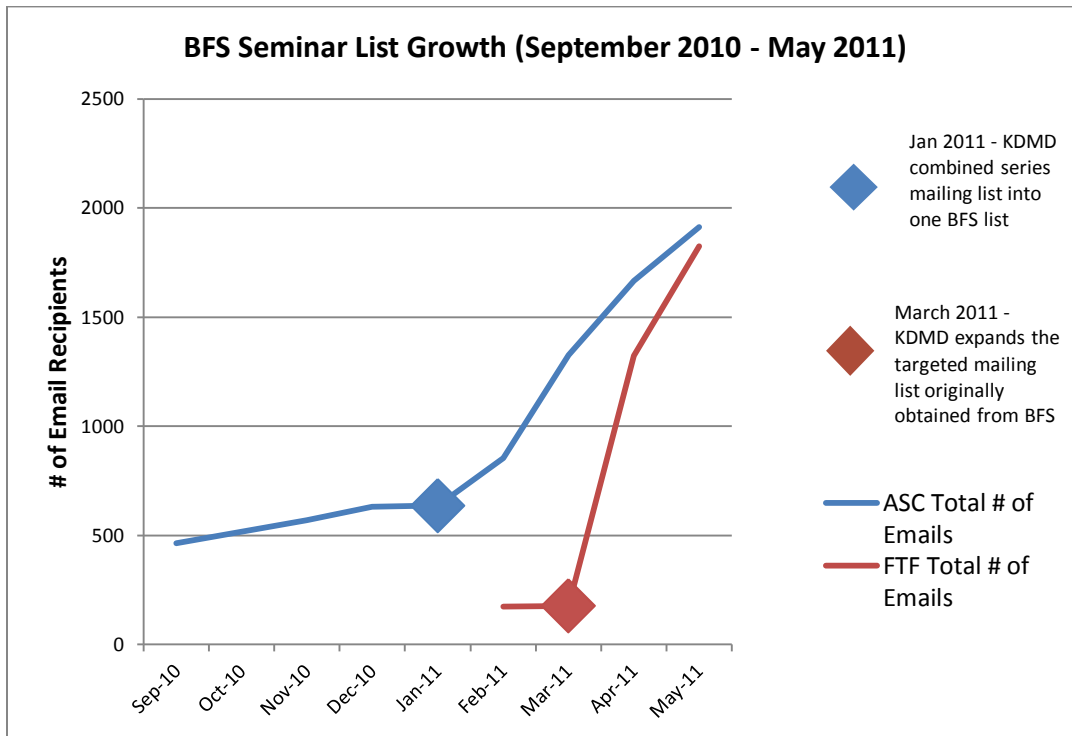
Seminars

BFS seminars have continued to be well attended during this reporting period. The number of participants from different countries participating in these events via webinar is a strong indication of

effective outreach to overseas participants and improvements to the webinar feature. The BFS Program is particularly interested in tracking its outreach to FTF countries and targeting more Mission participation.

Increased outreach efforts from the Communications team by improving the invitation design and promoting the seminars on Agrilinks has helped to boost the attendance rate at the seminars. This is particularly evident during the March-May 2011 period where the attendance rate was particularly high.

The figure below shows the MailChimp¹¹ list growth for the BFS mailing list between September and May 2011.



KDMD took over the management of the mailing list in March 2011 and oversaw a significant growth of a clean email list as soon as it took over.¹²

Participant access to post-event resources online has also improved during this reporting period with presentations becoming available within one day of the event and screencasts becoming available within one week. Participants are also notified via email once the seminar screencasts are available on Agrilinks.

¹¹ MailChimp is the email-marketing service through which KDMD manages mailing lists for the various project activities and produces email campaigns, including event invitations, newsletters, and announcements.

¹² Invitation campaigns were not available on MailChimp prior to September 2010. Invitation campaigns for FTF CSO events only available starting in February 2011.

An example of how knowledge gained from the Ag seminars is being applied in the field can be demonstrated by an experience shared through an email exchange between the USAID/Nigeria Mission, Zachary Baquet (BFS's Knowledge Management Advisor), and Michigan State University (MSU) technical experts leading a USAID BFS-funded food security project. Using the knowledge cycle as a vehicle for discussing this impact, one could follow how knowledge and resources developed by BFS were synthesized and shared out with an in-person and online audience of over 100 practitioners through the October 2010 Food Security III day-long symposium. Knowledge presented at the event was captured and turned into online screencasts and synthesis documents that were produced in coordination with KDMD that could be accessed on Agrilinks after the fact. Several months after the event, staff from the USAID/Nigeria Mission contacted Baquet on how to access the MSU presenters from the symposium. They had viewed several screencasts and found the information useful to an upcoming initiative they were working on. This communication is provided below:

"Dear Zachary: We at the Nigeria Mission are preparing a small project to address the needs of vulnerable households and nutrition and linking these to our agricultural activities. ... In doing some further research we came across the video presentation that was on your KDID website and found it to reinforce our own thinking and planning. We'd like to open a discussion with the authors of the video linked below and yourselves regarding the approaches suggested here."

Micheal Anderson, Deputy Director EG & Environment Team, USAID/Nigeria

Baquet connected USAID/Nigeria with the MSU team virtually. The team at MSU was eager to see their work applied and engaged in a series of follow-up discussions with the USAID/Nigeria Mission who then used this to shape their thinking around the design of a new program.

As the Agrilinks website continues to evolve and grow, the availability of resources and the promotion of events on the site has significantly helped establish linkages among Ag and Food Security practitioners. As the site extends its reach as well, the hope is it will see a new community grow that uses and shares best practices in agriculture and food security.

Discussions with practitioners indicate the Gender & Ag briefs have been useful to the TOPS¹³ knowledge sharing Food For Peace (FFP) implementer community and beyond. Also, the Gender advisor at BFS has promoted and distributed the gender briefs and continues to do so while travelling to the field during Gender trainings for Mission staff. There is anecdotal evidence that field-based practitioners find the briefs useful; from Cathy Bergman at Mercy Corps to Meaghan Murphy, KDMD BFS Program manager:

"Hi Meaghan! I am relieved to see you listed as an author for a brief that I'm eager to reference. Thanks! Your document has been recommended to me as particularly relevant to an issue that we find ourselves facing at the moment."

¹³ Technical and Operational Performance Support Program for FFP Grantees: *Highest quality information, knowledge, and best practices for improved methodologies in Title II food aid commodity program performance identified, established, shared and adapted.*

Thanks!
--Cathy"

More research needs to be done to determine the breadth of use of the briefs.

Trainings

The overall impact of the improvements cited in the previous section can be summarized as follows:

KDMD training programs reached 35 experienced agriculture practitioners largely from USAID Missions and approximately 75 new hires into the Agency. This cohort represents an important achievement for the Agency in building back the technical capacity and awareness of agriculture and other backstops, as well as Foreign Service Officer (FSO) and Foreign Service National (FSN) program staff. It is also a start of a stronger the community of agricultural practitioners. The trainings exposed all participants to the range of resources supported by BFS, including KDMD activities such as seminars, webinars, online technical resources, discussions, and more to foster continuous learning.

KDMD staff observed increased engagement, discussion, and dialogue among the over 50 different USAID staff and partners that presented and contributed to training efforts. Understanding the impacts of these technical discussions and increased engagement in training efforts will require closer examination moving forward, yet overall they contribute to a stronger sense of technical community that KDMD has helped foster. Specifically, these trainings connected USAID technical staff, new and existing, to others in the Agency, helping strengthen USAID's own professional networks. The hope is that they now have contacts to go to for more information.

Ag Overview Course

Case Study

The revision of the case study format through the three different iterations of the Ag Overview Course was intended to build critical thinking and skills among participants on how to effectively interview stakeholders, define questions, and identify sources of information. Limiting the case study to the second day also received good feedback from participants during the second iteration of the course. Presentations during the report-outs were also stronger than in the first course.

Changing the case study format to have the five stakeholder interviews concurrently resulted in, from a learning perspective, more group interaction and participant engagement. It also allowed more time for group work (brainstorming what information they needed, which stakeholders to interview, and debriefing time), which in turn resulted in a higher technical quality of the presentations at the end of the training.

Changes made to the delivery of the case study in the September 2010 Ag Overview Course from the May 2010 course have encouraged more interaction among participants. The Program does not anticipate making any major content changes to the case study for the next iteration of the course to be offered in September 2011.

Integration of Ag Sector Orientation Half Day

The presence of the course facilitator at this half-day event and the facilitator's revision of the handouts and takeaways enabled more linkages and led to an agreement that KDMD and BFS would turn this event into an online module to complete before the course. Therefore, it was not necessary to implement this as a stand-alone training.

Ag Core Course

The establishment of the "day leads" concept first started to evolve during the December 2010 Ag Core Course. This concept later evolved into "theme leads" due to the proclivity of related topics to be covered over multiple days for the Ag Core course. The development of theme leads for the December 2010 Ag Core Course helped inform the way forward for developing the content for the next iteration of the course offered in June 2011. This day lead concept was also later adopted by the EG Program in the Adult Learning & Training (ALT) portfolio resulting in a portfolio-wide improvement.

In an effort to make key integration themes more apparent through the course, between December and June 2011, the "theme leads" concept started to evolve into "integration leads".¹⁴ The outcomes of this change will be reporting during the next reporting period.

¹⁴ Integration themes include gender, nutrition, and climate change.

Economic Growth Program

The Economic Growth Program allows the EG Office (EGAT/EG) to leverage knowledge sharing activities and improve its training program by infusing it with adult learning methodology and knowledge management best practices to meet the needs of the new and existing EG Officers. The majority of KDMD's work in the EG Program is focused on adult learning and training. In the past year, the first blended EG Overview Course was implemented starting with online modules in May 2010 and culminating in a 5-day workshop in June 2010. Many lessons were captured from this first iteration of the blended EG Overview Course and applied to subsequent course offerings in Dec 2010 and June 2011.

A. Synopsis of Activities & Products

The EG Program team supported the development and implementation of seven courses: the delivery of five EG courses and content capture for two in-depth courses. The Introduction to the EG Overview Course was offered twice in the fall. These short courses were offered to DLIs who were unable to attend the full EG Overview Course. Participants gave valuable feedback on the online assets from the Intro to EG course. One of these suggestions was to make the content mobile so that users could access the modules while on travel. This suggestion will be applied to all EG assets going forward. The other courses supported by the Adult Learning & Training (ALT) team include the EG in Post-Conflict Countries in October 2010 and two iterations of the EG Overview Course in June 2010 and December 2010.

Additionally, the EG team collaborated with different teams in the EG Office to begin knowledge capture of two in-depth courses: Enterprise Development and Trade & Commercial. This capture will feed into the online asset development as well as the development of the certification courses.

Trainings (May 2010 – May 2011)
Economic Growth
Intro to EG Overview Course (<i>August/September 2010</i>)
Intro to EG Overview Course (<i>September/October 2010</i>)
Economic Growth Overview Course (<i>June 2010</i>)
EG in Post Conflict Countries-Cairo (<i>October 2010</i>)
Enterprise Development-Bangkok (<i>November 2010</i>)
Trade & Commercial-Bangkok (<i>November 2010</i>)
Economic Growth Overview Course (<i>December 2010</i>)

B. Synopsis of Evaluations

Courses are evaluated through the following mechanisms:

- Participant Feedback (Activity Assessments and Course evaluations)
- Course Organizers/Facilitator Debriefs and AARs

The EG Program has been successful in collecting more than 50 percent of the in-person evaluations from these trainings. The breakdown can be found below:

Participant Attendance versus Evaluation Completion (May 2010 – May 2011)	Participant Attendance	Completed Evaluation
Economic Growth Overview Course (<i>June 2010</i>)	45	32 (71.1%)
EG in Post Conflict Countries-Cairo (<i>October 2010</i>)	14	13 (92.8%)
Enterprise Development-Bangkok (<i>December 2010</i>)	40**	38 (95%)
Economic Growth Overview Course (<i>December 2010</i>)	30	26 (86.6%)

Please note that not all evaluations were completed for every day – Day One of each training has the most responses. A&L will work with the ALT team to find ways to increase participant responses.

*** This is an estimate as another contractor managed the attendee list.*

Averages of participants’ feedback assessing whether sessions were informative/had clear objectives and whether they were relevant to their work (1=Strongly Disagree and 5=Strongly Agree) are provided in the table below. These figures suggest that participants viewed the courses as important to their work and practical.

	Informative/Clear Objectives	Relevant to work
Pre-work Modules Results (<i>only for the June EG Overview Training</i>) <i>5-11 respondents</i>	4.11	4.21
EG Trainings <i>4-38 respondents</i>	4.06	4.03

Qualitative Assessments

Participants also gave qualitative feedback which fell under a few common themes for all the courses. Representative feedback has been grouped into two categories: “What worked well” and “What did not work well” and are listed in order of frequency in the tables below.

What worked well
1) Presentations with 'real life' experiences
2) Blended learning approach
3) Good introductory course for those without an economic background
4) Case studies
5) Films
6) Activities that include role playing
7) Online resources valuable to participants
8) Group discussions

What could be improved
1) Use more interactive activities
2) Use more practical examples/real life case studies
a. Studies should be more relevant to their work - not high-level cases
b. Examples from different regions with real solutions
3) Provide more clarification on definitions/terminology
4) Ensure course is designed to fit with all levels of experience among participants

What could be improved
a. Participants with an economics background did not learn anything new
5) Give access to presentation materials prior to the course
a. Have presentation slides in binders for note taking
6) Decrease number of PowerPoint presentations
7) Allow more time for participants to complete the pre-work component due to travel schedules and other priorities
8) Apply content from pre-course work to the in-person course
9) Make the pre-course a requirement
a. In-person trainings assumed that participants completed the courses
10) Modules were hard to load where Internet connections were a problem

The survey results were supplemented with feedback from the course implementers and the USAID EG team to determine improvements to future courses; these are described on sections C and D below.

C. Lessons Learned and Applied

The combination of all the feedback cited above has allowed the EG Program to successfully implement better trainings over time. After each training or activity, the training team collates the most significant comments from the evaluations and debriefs. The team then develops a set of recommendations to address these different comments. USAID and the training team then agree on the recommendations/improvements to apply in the next course iteration. The tables below list the changes applied to each course offering.

Intro to EG Overview Course Trainings

TRAININGS & ACTIVITIES	RECOMMENDATIONS FROM PREVIOUS COURSE	RECOMMENDATIONS APPLIED
Intro to EG Overview Course (August/September 2010)	1) Experts should meet ahead of time to divide up topic areas within the modules to avoid covering the same topic 2) Participants should be encouraged to ask questions 3) Screencasts should be downloadable so users can print them, make notes, and view offline	1) Presenters were instructed to come prepared to the sessions with slides/handouts and they did this 2) Program Manager reached out to participants to submit questions for presenters ahead of time 3) All online modules have been made into downloadable formats (MP3 & video)
Intro to EG Overview Course (September/October 2010)**	1) For Module One, it would be good to have a non-economist on the panel because there were many non-economist participants 2) Jeopardy game should be used as just a teaching tool	1) Non-economist speakers were made available for the “Ask the EG Expert” Module One session 2) Jeopardy game was introduced as a teaching tool and not a rigorous conclusive test of EG material

** This was the last offering of this course

Economic Growth Overview Courses

TRAININGS & ACTIVITIES	RECOMMENDATIONS FROM PREVIOUS COURSE	RECOMMENDATIONS APPLIED
<p>Economic Overview Growth Course (December 2010)</p>	<p><u>Pre-Course Work</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Improve timeframe & workload 2) Provide a mobile media format 3) Improve logistical communications 4) Improve use of discussion forums 5) Eliminate Pre-Assessments 	<p><u>Pre-Course Work</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Online course extended 10 days for participants to complete each module 2) All screencast modules were put into a downloadable format (MP3 or video) 3) Email notifications were built into the LMS to inform participants about timelines 4) Same as #3 5) Pre-assessments were removed
	<p><u>Workshop</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Clarify the agenda and timeframes of the lectures & exercises 2) Provide advance preparation for primary case study 3) Make case study groups smaller to improve dynamics 4) Make case study resource materials more concise and organized 5) Clarify roles and responsibilities for group presentations/mission panel feedback 	<p><u>Workshop</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Agenda was reformatted so that sessions times were provided 2) Participants received their case study via e-mail and received notification from EGLC; case studies were available for download from EGLC¹⁵ 3) Plan was to have smaller case study groups, but the team received extra un-anticipated participants*** 4) Country data/reference materials were pared down for the December offer & workbooks were re-formatted 5) Better instructions were provided to mission panel participants on both their role & the type of critique they should provide
<p>Economic Growth Overview Course (June 2011)</p>	<p><u>Pre-Course Work</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Define scope and appropriateness of pre-work 2) Increase participant participation in online modules 3) Create pre-work refresher 	<p>Recommendations for this course have not yet been applied.</p>

¹⁵ The Economic Growth Learning Center, managed by Global Learning Systems (GLS), an adult learning specialist firm that is a subcontractor on the KDMD project.

TRAININGS & ACTIVITIES	RECOMMENDATIONS FROM PREVIOUS COURSE	RECOMMENDATIONS APPLIED
	<p><u>Workshop</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Co-develop pre-assessment to customize pre-work 2) Co-reply to participant questions during the online prep week 3) Identify workshop "special topics" for participant days to keep content fresh 4) Identify additional case examples and/or exercises 5) Lead a content re-cap on their day/play "judge" for re-cap activities such as Jeopardy/others TBD 6) Roam with the facilitator during small group activities 	<p>Recommendations for this course have not yet been applied.</p>
	<p><u>General</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Re-cap activity design and structure 2) Give field staff access to the materials 3) Improve registration process 	<p>Recommendations for this course have not yet been applied.</p>

*****As a result of a number of unanticipated participants, the recommendation could not be applied. Stricter management needs to be adhered to.**

EG in Post Conflict Countries/Enterprise Development/Trade & Commercial Courses

TRAININGS & ACTIVITIES	RECOMMENDATIONS FROM PREVIOUS COURSE	RECOMMENDATIONS APPLIED
<p>EG in Post Conflict Countries -Cairo (October 2010)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Streamline communication channels by having KDMD manage all communications with participants 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) KDMD took over previous USAID role of sending pre-event instructional emails and now manages the communications for all EG courses.
<p>EG in Post Conflict Countries-Cairo (June 2011)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Provide stronger message of expectation from both USAID & KDMD to participants to complete the pre-course work as only 50 percent of the participants completed them. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) For the June PC course offering the prerequisite activities were mandatory and KDMD sent several reminders to participants to complete the activities.

D. Impact of Improvements

KDMD has influenced changes in the Introduction to EG Overview, EG Overview and the EG in Post-Conflict Courses. As noted, KDMD is focusing on knowledge capture and online asset development for the EG in-depth courses.

Introduction to EG Overview

This abbreviated version of the EG Overview Course was a new offering for the EG Office and was organized to meet a high demand of EG officers in Washington, DC. Participants were asked to complete all of the online learning modules associated with the EG Overview and then attend two in-person sessions to meet the presenters, participate in some practical application activities, and address any

concerns they may have had about the content. The ALT team organized different formats for these in-person sessions, adapting each subsequent session based on feedback from the prior offering.

One of the main recommendations that the team focused on for the second two iterations of this course were better organization with the presenters. In the first iteration, the team found that some of the presenters within the same module had redundancies and overlapping messages. In addition, the team found that some of the presenters were simply restating what the participants had already viewed in the online modules, which did not provide for very effective in-person sessions. For the latter two iterations of this course, the team worked more closely with the presenters by holding short dry runs with the module presenters. These meetings defused the overlap between the presenters because they could get a clearer understanding of what the other presenters were preparing. From the training team's perspective, the in-person sessions in the latter two iterations were better organized and ran more smoothly.

The other significant recommendation that came from these Intro to EG Courses was the request to have the online learning modules in a more accessible format. Originally, all of the online learning sessions were only accessible online from the EGLC. Participants expressed the desire to be able to view the content while traveling or while working offline. GLS took this request and made all online assets downloadable (as either MP3 or video file) and all online modules created going forward will have this offline accessibility as well. Overall, this change gives the participants greater convenience in completing the learning modules. The download option also enables participants with limited connectivity to view the online modules more easily. The number of downloads are not currently tracked but will be as of the coming project year.

EG Overview Course

KDMD has supported the implementation of the EG Overview four times and the course has gone through significant changes with each new offering. The first EGO offering managed by KDMD was held in Dec 2009 as a traditional in-person course with a few pre-course modules. The first blended learning course was offered in June 2010; participants completed 6 weeks of online work and then participated in a 5-day workshop to review and apply their knowledge, and to learn of new emerging trends.

As with the Intro to EG Overview course, one of the most significant recommendations was to make the online material more accessible, KDMD made each of the online assets downloadable as audio and video files. The number of downloads is not currently tracked but will be as of the coming project year. In response to feedback that the pre-assessments were redundant with the knowledge-checks at the end of each of the sessions the team eliminated the pre-assessments in the next iteration of the online course, this also shortened the pre-course workload for the participants. The other significant feedback based on the first EGO blended course was that the timeframe for completing the online work was not realistic, for the second offering of the EGO participants were given 10 days to complete each of the four modules instead of one week.

The second offering of the course elicited more valuable feedback which greatly influenced the subsequent offering. Although participants found 10 days adequate to complete each module they also

stated that the workload was too demanding and that they were spending too many hours trying to complete the online activities. KDMD and the USAID course planning team reviewed all the online activities and prioritized sessions that were critical for participants to complete and then identified sessions that could be considered more as supplemental or optional activities. It is expected that this new structure for the online modules will increase the rate of completion for the online course work. Another major change to be applied to future course offerings will be to incorporate the use of day leads in the course planning – the use of day leads was first successfully applied to KDMD’s Ag Course offerings in December 2010 and the ALT team recognizes that EG Course offerings can also benefit from this concept.

EG in Post-Conflict Countries

The EG Program team supported the implementation of the EG in Post-Conflict Countries Course two times since the beginning of the Program and once during this reporting period. One of the main areas of change that have been addressed is clearer communication to the course participants. Previously, USAID sent instructional emails and course updates to participants while KDMD was also communicating directly with participants to provide instruction on the online work and course logistics. These communication roles needed to be streamlined to minimize overlapping correspondence. In this past course offering, KDMD took on the lead role in communication so all correspondence occurred through the same channel, which made it clearer to participants who to go to for questions or concerns about the course. From a training and logistics perspective, the communication flowed more smoothly during the months leading up to this course.

The other significant change for this past course offering was the better level of preparation by the participants. In past course offerings, the participants were instructed to complete online modules or reading materials but the team found that a high number of participants would arrive to the training having not completed the prerequisite assignments. This lack of preparation by some people resulted in delays in the workshop as the presenters or facilitators had to repeat content to bring those participants up to speed. For this past iteration, the messaging around the prerequisites was much stricter as the assignments were considered “mandatory” prerequisites. For this past course offering, nearly all the participants had completed their prerequisite readings that resulted in participants being better prepared for the course sessions. In addition, time was not wasted in going through the prerequisite material again.

Europe & Eurasia Program

The overarching mission of the Europe/Eurasia Democracy and Governance Social Transition (E&E/DG/ST) team is to enhance the ability of all people in E&E countries to improve their quality of life by assisting these countries in establishing effective and efficient social systems appropriate to market democracies. The ST team covers these key sub-sectors: education, labor markets, social services, social insurance, and social assistance, as well as issues relating to gender and trafficking in persons. Health issues are covered by the E&E Bureau's Health team. The Democratic Governance and Economic Growth team continues to encourage the economic and democratic policy gains in the region. KDMD's role is to assist these teams in developing knowledge sharing activities and products that increase awareness of the teams' work in these areas among staff at USAID Missions and Washington offices, the State Department, other donors, NGOs, implementing partners, researchers, and other constituencies in the region.

A. Synopsis of Activities & Products

During the latter half of the May 2010-May 2011 reporting period, the Europe & Eurasia Program started supporting the E&E Health and the Democracy & Governance (D&G) offices in addition to the Social Transition (ST) team.

Activities implemented during this time period include:

- Social Transitions site development and launch(socialtransitions.org)
- Video Teleconference Meeting: Medication Assisted Therapy (MAT) Policy Advocacy Toolkit for E&E Missions

The Social Transitions site was the first site to be developed on the new Drupal platform as part of the KDID Portal. During this reporting period, refinements were made to the site in terms of content, look and feel leading up to the Beta launch of the site at the end of March 2011. Plans are in place to refine and update the site to incorporate new functionality that has been developed on other KDID sites, which will better align the socialtransitions.org with the family of KDID sites.

The E&E Program also supported the E&E Health team in the dissemination of a Medication Assisted Therapy Policy Advocacy toolkit to help address the HIV epidemic in the E&E region. A Video Teleconference (VTC) Meeting was held in December 2010 to promote this toolkit for Missions in the region as part of USAID's Health Policy Initiative (HPI).

B. Synopsis of Evaluations

VTC Meeting: MAT Policy Advocacy Toolkit

During this reporting period the VTC Meeting was evaluated. Nine participants from six Missions participated in this evaluation:

- Armenia: 3 participants
- Azerbaijan: 1 participant
- Kazakhstan: 1 participant

- Kyrgyzstan: 2 participants
- Ukraine: 1 participant
- Uzbekistan: 1 participant

Two key data points were used to gauge the relevance and usefulness of the activity towards participants' work. The majority of respondents were neutral towards whether they could apply what they learned to their work.

E&E MAT VTC Toolkit (December 2010)						
	Strongly Agree (5)	Agree (4)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)	Valid N
The subject matter is important to my work.	3 33.3%	4 44.4%	2 22.2%			9
I can apply what I learned to my work.	2 22.2%	1 11.1%	6 66.7%			9

Participants were also asked to indicate their likelihood of accessing resources in various formats. The survey results below mirror the results from the mission needs assessment survey in that participants are less likely to access resources from an online discussion forum and show a preference for obtaining resources through in-person interactions.

E&E MAT VTC Toolkit (December 2010)						
Please indicate the extent to which you are likely to access resources in the following formats:	Very Likely (5)	Likely (4)	Neutral (3)	Unlikely (2)	Very Unlikely (1)	Valid N
Colleague or peer	6 66.7%	1 11.1%	1 11.1%	1 11.1%		9
In-person event (training, workshop, conference, networking event)	6 66.7%	2 22.2%	1 11.1%			9
Online Event (webinar, online conference, e-learning)	1 11.1%	6 66.7%	1 11.1%	1 11.1%		9
Online resources (documents, screencasts)	4 44.4%	2 22.2%	3 33.3%			9
Printed materials (books, magazines, periodicals)	5 55.6%		3 33.3%	1 11.1%		9
Online Discussion Forum		1 11.1%	2 22.2%	2 22.2%	4 44.4%	9
Video Teleconference (VTC)	5 55.6%	2 22.2%		1 11.1%	1 11.1%	9

C. Lessons Learned and Applied

VTC Meeting: MAT Policy Advocacy Toolkit

Participants were receptive to the format and technology used for this training. It is unclear whether there will be another iteration of this type of training, as the Health and DG teams have shifted their priorities to celebrating USAID DG and Health work in the E&E region in light of USAID's plans to phase out missions or programs in the region.

Social Transitions Site

The ST site was the first site to be developed on the new Drupal platform. Several lessons learned in developing the ST site were applied towards building the other sites, namely Microlinks, on KDID. The main lesson learned was how *not* to build search functionality. The next reporting period will see some additional improvements to the site to make it more consistent with the structure of the other KDID sites.

D. Impact of Improvements

The lessons learned from the development of the ST site helped to inform the way forward on how to develop the Microlinks 2.0 site and the subsequent sites. Specifically, this has resulted in more effective search functionality in the newer sites.

Jamaica Program

The USAID/Jamaica Partners for Educational Progress Community of Practice (CoP) is building a network of education practitioners and stakeholders through face-to-face meetings and online activities to share experiences, discuss critical issues, contribute to policy development, and help advance the field of basic education in Jamaica. The CoP is developing specific knowledge services and products for members, offering assistance to members that request help, supporting the application of tools and best practices, and contributing to aid and development effectiveness.

A. Synopsis of Activities & Products

The Jamaica team has completed six activities and conducted five AARs during the reporting period.

Activities (May 2010 – May 2011)
Jamaica
CoP Stakeholders Forum (<i>June 2010</i>)*
CoP Launch Event (<i>December 2010</i>)*
EduExchange I: The Role of School in Improving Student Performance in Challenging Contexts (<i>September 2010</i>)*
EduExchange II: That Final One Third: Towards Attaining 100% Mastery in the Grade Four Literacy Test (<i>February 2011</i>)*
EduExchange III: Masculinity and Educational Performance: Engaging Our Boys in the Classroom (<i>April 2011</i>)*
EduFocus Bulletins - Six bulletins (<i>May2010 -May 2011</i>)

* **Activities for which AARs were conducted**

B. Synopsis of Evaluations

USAID/ Jamaica did not obligate the necessary funding and KDMD had to reduce the level of effort (LOE) of the project staff planned for some activities. For example, the team elected to design and analyze their own surveys in order to minimize the level of effort the A&L team charged the Program. To this end the A&L team trained them on Survey Gizmo, the online survey tool that KDMD uses, and some of its simple analytic tools. The Jamaica team issued a total of 3 surveys during the reporting period and received a total of **34 completed surveys** from the participants (for all surveys):

Jamaica Program Administered Surveys (May 2010 - May 2011)	Total
Surveys Completed by Participants	34
Jamaica Basic Education Community of Practice Follow-Up Evaluation (<i>July 2010</i>)	24
Jamaica EduExchange (<i>September 2010</i>)	4
Jamaica Partners for Educational Progress CoP Members Baseline Survey (<i>December 2010</i>)	6

The online activities primarily attracted policy makers, people affiliated with the Ministry of Education, teachers, and NGO personnel, however a large proportion of survey respondents identified themselves as “Other,” which made it more difficult for the Jamaica team to focus their CoP topics based on the majority of the participants.

Most of the participants were based in Kingston; there is no clarity as to whether this was due to outreach being limited to the capital or due to difficult internet access outside the capital.

The baseline survey conducted after the June 2010 CoP stakeholders forum had the most responses (24) and demonstrated that the KDMD Jamaica team and USAID/Jamaica had clearly conveyed the purpose of the CoP and how it related to the work of educators and policy makers. Over 85 percent of the respondents stated that:

- They understood how the Basic Education CoP relates to their work.
- They would like to become a member of Basic Education CoP.
- They would like to attend another Basic Education CoP forum or meeting.
- They would actively encourage others to join the Basic Education CoP.
- They would use the Basic Education CoP e-query service to ask questions relevant to their work.

While there were very few responses to the surveys for subsequent events, a few themes emerged around expectations and products and services. Stakeholders stated that learning new skills, keeping up with current development in the field of education, and expanding their personal networks were primary motivations for them to participate in the CoP.

Stakeholders had expectations that the CoP would help with the following:

- Creating of innovative solutions to problems
- Enhancing their existing skills and allowing them to learn new things
- Identifying opportunities for collaboration and knowledge sharing with colleagues and/or peers
- Bringing lessons learned back to their organizations and thus improving their organizations' performance

The following CoP proposed products and services were rated as useful:

- E-discussions and Summary Discussions
- News Updates (e.g. project info, special initiatives, etc.)
- Announcements (e.g. vacancies, funding opportunities, etc.)

For several reasons—including challenges with the website, a shortage of funds for the project, and a lack of ease and familiarity with the technology—the initial enthusiasm expressed by the stakeholders did not directly translate into active participation in the CoP. The KDMD Jamaica team created accounts for the stakeholders, making them members of the CoP, and when it became clear that few members were registering for the EduExchange online activities, the team registered members for them. By the third EduExchange, participants expected the CoP Facilitation Team to register them for events.

C. Lessons Learned

Resources

The Jamaica Program has had budget constraints from its inception. In order to limit charges to the Program, the Jamaica team took on tasks normally performed by KDMD Portfolios. For example, the A&L Team trained the Jamaica team in the use of Survey Gizmo so that they could design and administer surveys and perform minimal analysis. The team also learned how to use MailChimp in order to create invitations, a task normally performed by the Communications team. Taking on activities normally performed by the Portfolios took time away from the work of building the Community of Practice. Building a new community of practice requires an important investment of time at the beginning to

engage the community; this investment is even more important in environments where there is not a strong culture of using online tools to conduct business and share knowledge and therefore a need to train, provide support, as well as engage.

A result of the lack of resources was that CoP participants did not engage with the technology as intended (i.e. registering themselves and filling out online profiles). As mentioned above, the Jamaica team had to register CoP members, create profiles, and register them for various EduExchange activities. Had the CoP participants registered themselves and created their own profiles, they would have more ownership of the CoP; however this would have required more resources for community engagement and training than were available. At this point, the CoP is not a self-sustaining entity.

The new KDID platform was created as a hub and spoke model. This meant that the Jamaica site was automatically going to have many of the same features, functionality, and look/feel of other KDMD sites regardless of whether this was appropriate for the needs of the community. For the most part, this worked well, but once again lack of resources came into play. The Program did not have the wherewithal to fully train the facilitation team to take full advantage of all the website features. This resulted in participants experiencing the site as too robust for their needs, given the low level of comfort with technology articulated by members early in the Program activity, and contributed to the lack of ownership of the CoP by its members.

At this time, further funding of the Program is not a certainty, which means the Program may not be able to apply the lessons learned in the last year.

Policy Planning and Learning (PPL) Program

During this reporting period, the KDMD team provided logistical, evaluation, and facilitation support to the USAID Bureau of Policy, Planning and Learning (PPL) for its Evidence Summit on Promoting Broad-Based Economic Growth held in December 2010.

A. Synopsis of Activities & Products

During the May 2010-May 2011 reporting period, the PPL Program:

- Implemented a **Broad-Based Economic Growth Evidence Summit** and **e-Consultation**
- Planned for the June 2011 Evidence Summit on **Agricultural Technology Adoption & Food Security in Africa** in conjunction with the Agricultural Technology Adoption Initiative (ATAI) and the USAID Bureau for Food Security (BFS)

The e-Consultation on Promoting Broad-Based Economic Growth was held in October 2010 in preparation for the Evidence Summit that took place in December 2010. Learning outcomes from the 3-day online discussion were intended to inform the agenda for the Evidence Summit in December. Participants of the online discussion included USAID staff, implementing partners, and members of the research and academic community.

The Broad-Based Economic Growth Evidence Summit – an invitation-only event – was a 2-day summit that was held as part of USAID’s commitment to support evidence-based policy and programming and was designed to engage internal and external thought leaders at USAID, field missions, implementing partner organizations, members of the academic community, and other key stakeholder organizations. The event included many different types of sessions: individual presenters, facilitated panels, Q&A, breakout sessions, and a small group discussion. It was largely managed by the Office of Learning, Evaluation, and Research (LER) within the PPL Bureau with assistance from BFS.

B. Synopsis of Evaluations

E-Consultation: Broad Based Economic Growth

The primary purpose of the e-Consultation was to help shape the agenda for the Evidence Summit. The majority of participants in the e-Consultation stated that the event provided useful resources and that they would not only recommend e-Consultations to others but they would participate in the activity again; however there was no strong correlation between the recommendations which came out of the event and the final agenda of the Evidence Summit.

Broad-Based Economic Growth Evidence Summit

The Evidence Summit was attended by 64 people on the first day and 44 people on the second day. The table below summarizes the participant assessment of sessions in terms of whether they found them informative and relevant to their job on a scale of 1-5, (1=Strongly Disagree and 5=Strongly Agree)

Day	# Attendees	# Respondents	Sessions were Informative	Sessions were Relevant to job
1	64	19-22	4.24	4.26
2	44	13-16	4.20	4.26

Although the sessions were rated highly on the informative and relevancy scales, there was a uniform criticism of the session formats: most participants stated that there were too many PowerPoint presentations, too much lecturing, and not enough discussion.

Three out of four breakout sessions and the final discussion on Day Two were also very well received.¹⁶ The majority of participants that responded to these questions on both days (N = 3-14) reported the following:

- They *had enough information* to fully participate
- The experience range of the group *was useful* for the exercise
- They learned something that *can be applied* to their current job

The implementers noted that the Summit would have been more effective if there was more clarity on the intended outputs and the content streamlined.

C. Lessons Learned and Applied

The lessons learned were as follows:

- **Clearer goals of the summit and presentations:** Some of the presentations were too detailed to follow and the overall goal of the summit was unclear to many participants.
- **Format effectiveness:** The participants who answered the survey consistently scored “effective format” lower than all the other attributes of the sessions. A great deal of information was shared during the summit - there is a need to explore other means of sharing information effectively beyond PowerPoint presentations.
- **Breakout sessions:** Breakout sessions were popular; perhaps this format could be used more often in the next summit as a venue to convey information, create dialogue, and enhance learning.

The KDMD Program management noted the following:

- The expected outputs and outcomes of the summit needed to be clearly defined. The outputs were not clearly defined, nor was the audience for the outputs that were planned. Many

¹⁶ **Breakout Session #1:** What is the role of financial service policies and programs in contributing to broad-based growth?

Breakout Session #2: What social protection programs effectively contribute to broad-based growth?

Breakout Session #3: What education policies and strategies lead to broad-based growth?

Discussion (Day 2): What does this mean for USAID?

participants were curious about whether they would leave the summit with tools they could apply to their work as well as whether USAID would have follow-on activities based on the results of the summit. Neither point was addressed during or after the summit.

- KDMD should have had a larger role in managing the event from the beginning (i.e., managing invitations, communicating frequent with speakers, implementing dry runs, streamlining the content, etc.).
- KDMD should have had more control over shaping the agenda.
- The facilitator should have been involved earlier in the process.

D. Impact of Improvements

The KDMD team decided to implement the following recommendations for the next Summit on **Agricultural Technology Adoption & Food Security in Africa** to be held in June 2011 in conjunction with the Agricultural Technology Adoption Initiative (ATAI) and the Bureau for Food Security (BFS):

- Work with the client to clarify the expected outputs of the Summit
- Establish direct contact with the speakers to shape the content
- Involve the facilitator earlier in the process

The impact of these improvements will be gauged at the June 2011 Summit.

Office of Development Partners (ODP) Program

A. Synopsis of Activities & Products

There was only one activity implemented during May 2010–May 2011 reporting period.

- ODP/PSA Alliance Officer Training Course (March 2011) – 20 participants

The Alliance Officer Training Course was designed, developed, and implemented by KDMD as a pilot course. While the target audience for the course was originally intended for Alliance Officers (DLI Backstop 21s), those who attended represented various USAID bureaus, offices, technical backgrounds, and countries of assignment. The learning objectives identified at this course were as follows:

- Develop an understanding of the potential role of the private sector in international development through partnerships
- Build an understanding of the key steps in alliance building and how they apply in USAID’s programming cycle
- Apply core alliance building skills and tools throughout USAID’s programming cycle

B. Synopsis of Evaluations

The table below shows the average participant assessment of sessions for the 5-day course on a scale of 1-5, (1=Strongly Disagree and 5=Strongly Agree) in terms of whether the sessions were **informative** and whether they **helped participants prepare for their overseas assignments**. The assessment was largely positive with participants *agreeing* that the sessions were both informative and helped prepare them for their overseas assignments.

ODP PSA Alliance Officer Training March 2011	Sessions were Informative	Sessions helped prepare for overseas assignment
7-17 respondents	4.16	4.03

C. Lessons Learned and Applied

One of the main lessons learned during the planning process was that two months is insufficient time to plan a course. This time constraint effectively meant that there was no time for an analysis phase prior to launching into the design and development of the course and that the design and development phases were compressed into one simultaneous process. However, despite the rushed timeline, the course was implemented successfully.

The table below, based on participant feedback and AARs/debrief sessions between USAID and the team, represents some of the recommendations for the next iteration of the course. The recommendations are categorized in terms of **planning/process**, **course design & delivery**, and **course content**. Select recommendations have been applied in terms of planning and designing the next iteration of the course, tentatively planned for January 2012 in Zambia.

RECOMMENDATIONS	
Planning/Process	
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Clarify fully the purpose of the course 2. Clarify roles and responsibilities of USAID and contractors from the beginning 3. Provide more lead time to develop the course (six months minimum) 4. Ensure participants are familiar with ODP topics and terminology prior to the course 5. Ensure timely submission of presentations from speakers so team can better manage timing of presentations 6. Involve the private sector to a greater extent 7. Understand participant experience level to help gauge the case studies and engagement 8. Send course announcement earlier/increase promotion efforts to encourage broader participation from the field 9. Clarify attendance policy 10. Send the final course agenda to participants a few days prior to the course
Course Design and Delivery	
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Conduct a site visit for participants to see a partnership in action 2. Increase time allotment for some of the sessions 3. Consider shortening the duration of the training (participants noted that five days was long) 4. Instruct groups to designate a presenter within their group and limit time to present 5. Preface panel sessions in terms of content to note 6. Provide joint USAID/Implementer presentations 7. Incorporate more participant-led learning, more story-telling, and Q&A 8. Condense presentations (some days were too slide heavy) and increase time for Q&A 9. Incorporate more input from the field 10. Include more open discussion with private sector representatives 11. Include more case studies/role-playing 12. Consider experience level when selecting presenters
Course Content	
Day 1	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide more details on what the USG brings to a partnership 2. Use fewer GDA case studies and go deeper
Day 2	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Organize “Steps of Alliance Building” module around a case: walk through theory, illustrate with case, integrate practice activities 2. Lengthen to one and a half days 3. Remove panel 4. Integrate program cycle information
Day 3	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Conclude “Steps of Alliance Building” module either with a site visit or a panel that includes stakeholders from one alliance: USAID, implementer, and private sector partner
Day 4	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Expand content and include practice activities for the “Communication Skills: Sales and Negotiations” modules.
Day 5	

- | |
|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Provide case activity to synthesize2. Discuss application planning |
|--|

D. Impact of Improvements

Four recommendations from above have been applied in the planning and design for the next iteration of the course. KDMD will:

- Clarify roles and responsibilities of USAID and contractors from the beginning –including the process for developing trainings–and conduct a presentation on roles and responsibilities. KDMD has also provided the USAID activity manager with meeting notes and action items to document decisions made and steps completed along the way.
- Design a needs assessment approach with the USAID activity manager to better understand participants' level of experience, which will help inform the case studies and engagement
- Include more case studies/role-playing
- Conduct a site visit for participants to see a partnership in action

Development Credit Authority (DCA) Program

DCA Portfolio Management responsibilities include maintaining relationships with financial institutions and USAID Missions in over 50 countries, monitoring and reporting on guarantee performance on a semi-annual basis, processing any claim requests, ensuring all fees are paid in a timely manner, and troubleshooting any problems related to the guarantees.

The purpose of the DCA Program is to provide support from KDMD Portfolios to complement the Portfolio Management and Risk Assessments support to USAID's credit guarantee programs.

A. Synopsis of Activities and Products

During this period the KDMD team:

- Completed the September 30, 2010 reporting cycle, reviewing and approving 118 loan schedule reports,
- Completed the March 31, 2011 reporting cycle, reviewing and approving 145 loan schedule reports,
- Coordinated the issuance of Notice of Payments Due (NPDs) for partners to pay their utilization fees, and
- Processed 24 claim requests for defaulted borrowers under the guarantees.

The KDMD Adult Learning & Training team is also working with DCA to transfer an existing 1.5-day in-person course to an online format so that USAID staff can complete the course at anytime from their respective country offices. All online assets are scheduled to be completed and will be loaded to USAID's Learning Management System in early August 2011.

B. Synopsis of Evaluations

There are no evaluations of DCA knowledge management activities. The monitoring and risk assessment activities are documented through the loan schedule reports, implementation memos, progress reports, risk assessment reports, and claim payments. KDMD will work with the DCA team to set up evaluations of the online assets in terms of use/access and usefulness after it is launched in August 2011.

There are however anecdotes which reflect the quality and timeliness of the DCA team's research and outputs. Below are a few examples:

"The materials you provided were the most responsive and best we received."

Tom Garwin, Deputy Director, Budget and Resource Management (acting)

"I'm using your memo as an example to all our staff to show how someone can come here for a few days and then within a few days turn around a well-written analysis of conditions in Peru."

Andrew Herscowitz, Deputy Director of USAID/Peru

*

“Kudos to everyone for the wonderful effort that everyone put into this. A true team effort. I’m sure you’ll agree that the exercise was a worthwhile one for all of us. We’ll need to keep up this pace from now on.”

Kofi Owusu-Boakye, Office of Development Credit

The above kudos demonstrate that the work of the KDMD DCA team is very much appreciated by their clients, though they do not give insights into the processes the team uses and improvements they have made throughout the year. The A&L team will work with project management to evaluate all KDMD DCA team activities for the next reporting period.