

# The Quality Link



## Introduction to IEQ

The Improving Educational Quality (IEQ) Project is in its eighth year! The first five-year contract (1991-1997) ended in January 1997, and the second five-year contract covers the period from June 1997- June 2002. The overall purpose continues: to inform decisions about policy and practice that reflect the harsh reality of the school experience (including the conditions that influence that experience) and to strengthen the professional capacity of host country educators and researchers to obtain and use that knowledge.

There are changes in the IEQ context, the host country partners, and the mechanism for working in-country. IEQ continues to provide leadership in directing attention to the issue of educational quality by systematically examining the school and classroom. This focus follows many years of attention to access and efficiency. The importance of: learning how materials were used (or not used); teacher proficiency in content and skills; pupil proficiency in numeracy and literacy; and the environment of teaching and learning gains currency as IEQ researchers produce evidence about the reality of the extent to which reforms

benefit learning. These findings were and are not reassuring. In the current educational context, quality and the importance of the local environment now rank as priorities in many developing countries. However, the goal of improving quality produces stress on educational systems that are also implementing universal primary education. IEQ addresses these and other country-based reform issues as we continue to work side by

side with local educators and researchers in each partner country.

The existing IEQ contract is an Indefinite Quantity Contract (IQC). Country activities now are supported through Task Orders funded by USAID Missions and Bureaus, as compared with the previous contract that specified three core countries plus buy-ins. Task Order 1 is the Core Management activity that supports a team of four senior staff whose time totals approximately 2.5 years. Tasks include: development and testing of intervention models, approaches and assessment tools; institutionalization of research, development and testing; knowledge synthesis and dissemination; and applied research frameworks. The core team is also tasked with many print deliverables, e.g., case studies, country papers, concept papers, Quality Link, and journal publications.

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## IEQ Mission

The Improving Educational Quality project continues a long-term initiative of the Global Bureau to assist USAID Missions and host countries implement their educational reforms in primary and early childhood education, as well as community development. IEQ seeks to:

- ◆ generate knowledge about the school and classroom reality of educators and students;
- ◆ use knowledge to inform policy dialogue and improve local practice;
- ◆ develop an in-country capacity for monitoring and evaluating educational results.



# IEQ in El Salvador

## CONTEXT

El Salvador has made considerable progress toward sustainable development and democracy since signing the 1992 Peace Accords, that ended a prolonged civil war. Although progress has been made in basic education, early childhood development is still problematic, especially in rural areas where poverty is widespread. There is a need to provide a broad spectrum of services to rural children at an early age to increase school readiness and educational outcomes. Nongovernmental Organization (NGO) participation in early childhood development efforts is necessary in order to reach rural populations. Unfortunately, most local NGOs have little experience in assessing service delivery.

In January 1998, USAID/El Salvador awarded a cooperative agreement to carry out a pilot program in Early Childhood Family Education to the *Fundación Salvadoreña de Salud y Desarrollo Social* (FUSAL), a local NGO. The cooperative agreement was designed as a "bridge" project between the Strengthening Achievement in Basic Education (SABE) project and a new project in Early Childhood Family Education (EDIFAM) projected to start in FY 1999.

FUSAL is primarily a health services delivery organization that, among other activities, operates *Centros de Bienestar Infantil* (child health centers). IEQ assisted host country researchers at FUSAL by supporting a study of child-rearing and instructional practices for children from birth to age three in rural contexts.

This IEQ technical assistance complements USAID/El Salvador's efforts to support and expand Salvadoran early childhood activities by increasing research capacity in El Salvador to better understand and act upon key factors that affect the learning of young children. This activity supports USAID/El Salvador's *Strategic Objective (SO)1: Expanded Access to Economic Opportunity for Rural Families*. It supports USAID/El Salvador's "reporting of results" by enabling USAID and its partners to systematically assess factors contributing to learning improvement among children and youth.

## PURPOSE AND ACTIVITIES

The primary purpose of this support was to increase local capacity to generate and use research to improve early childhood educational practice and policy.

IEQ's work in El Salvador focused on collaborating with FUSAL to design methodologies for studying the treatment of young children in home and pre-school settings, as well parents' attitudes toward the treatment of their children. IEQ provided technical support to FUSAL in developing data collection instruments, reviewing data collection strategies, analyzing data, and preparing the final report submitted to USAID/El Salvador. Researchers collected data through classroom and home observations, interviews, focus groups, and surveys.

## TIME PERIOD

IEQ supported FUSAL in El Salvador from February 1998 through October 1998.

## OUTCOMES AND PRODUCTS

FUSAL produced the final report, entitled *Prácticas de Crianza y Aprendizajes en las Zonas Rurales* (Child-rearing Practices and Learning in Rural Areas) in November 1998. The report on child-rearing practices informs planning related to future early childhood education initiatives. Child-rearing in home settings was found primarily to be undertaken by mothers, and characterized by physical abuse, child labor, and traditional gender modeling. Rural child development programs, as currently operated, primarily serve a care-taking function. Structured learning activities account for a small percentage of instructional time in such programs.

IEQ prepared a report on the technical assistance provided under IEQ, entitled *El Salvador Report on Technical Assistance to a Study of Child-Rearing Practices in Two Areas of Usulután*. This report provides lessons learned on building NGO capacity to carry out multi-method research on early childhood education. Instruments developed under this activity include observation forms, a parent survey, and interview and focus group guides.



A focus group with mothers in Municipio de Berlin, Usulután, El Salvador.

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**KEY WORDS:** early childhood education, NGO research capacity building, rural communities, home-school child rearing.

# IEQ in Eastern Europe and the New Independent States (ENI)

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IEQ

## CONTEXT

Educators in post-Communist Eastern Europe and the Newly Independent States are struggling to implement pedagogical practices that encourage active learning and critical thinking as well as to build stronger linkages between schools and communities. In 1994, the Soros Foundation began to assist interested countries in adapting the Step by Step Program—an approach to early childhood development based on the principles of active, child-centered learning and family participation in education. Step by Step has proven extremely popular and is currently active in 15 countries.

This activity supports USAID/ENI's strategic goals of *democracy and governance* and *social stabilization* by examining the role of participatory educational practices in promoting democratic behavior. In each of the four ENI host countries—Bulgaria, Kyrgyzstan, Romania, and Ukraine—researchers from local teacher training institutions: reviewed and contributed to the development of the research methodology, collected data, and assisted in data analysis.

## PURPOSE AND ACTIVITIES

IEQ conducted an in-depth evaluation of the impact of Step by Step in Bulgaria, Kyrgyzstan, Romania, and Ukraine. IEQ staff and host country researchers developed instruments and protocols that were used to collect a wide variety of data—from children's test scores to interviews with parents, teachers, and decision-makers—in order to measure the impact of the program. Using a combination of standardized research instruments and new assessment tools, researchers examined children's early literary, mathematical, and creative abilities. To assess the programs' effects on key stakeholders and institutions, the evaluation team



Ray Chesterfield

Researcher observes children in a Step by Step classroom in Romania.

relied on interviews with key informants, survey data, and Participatory Process for Results-oriented Sustainable Excellence (PROSE), an instrument for measuring changes in institutions' organizational capacity.

## TIME PERIOD

IEQ work in ENI countries began in February 1998. The team completed the final report and Executive Summary in April 1999.

## OUTCOMES AND PRODUCTS

IEQ products resulting from this activity include the *Step by Step Evaluation Report*, *Executive Summary*,

IEQ's partner countries are El Salvador, Guatemala, Guinea, Haiti, Malawi, and Uganda. Our Bureau partners are: Africa and ENI. Our Consortium partners are: the Academy for Educational Development, the Education Development Center, Juárez and Associates, Inc., and the University of Pittsburgh (GINIE Project).

This Quality Link introduces the second IEQ contract. We will produce another issue by June 1999 that will feature in-depth coverage of pupils, e.g., classroom experience and achievement. We will also expand the *IEQ Exchanges* begun in 1992 (e.g., seminars, conferences, and personal briefings) in a special column of this newsletter. We invite your ideas for ways to improve dissemination and communication of the *Improving Educational Quality Link*.

and a *Research Coordinator Manual*. Instruments developed for this activity include surveys, interview protocols, and a questionnaire. The evaluation documented how Step by Step helped increase children's academic performance, the level of implementation of active learning principles in classrooms, and the level of parent participation in classrooms. The IEQ evaluation also describes the ways in which Step by Step assisted in the establishment of school-based democratic policies and procedures to increase the participation of teachers, families, and communities, as well as how local institutions are developing mechanisms to sustain the program over time.

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**KEY WORDS:** early childhood education, democratic behavior, student assessment, child-centered learning, democracy and governance.

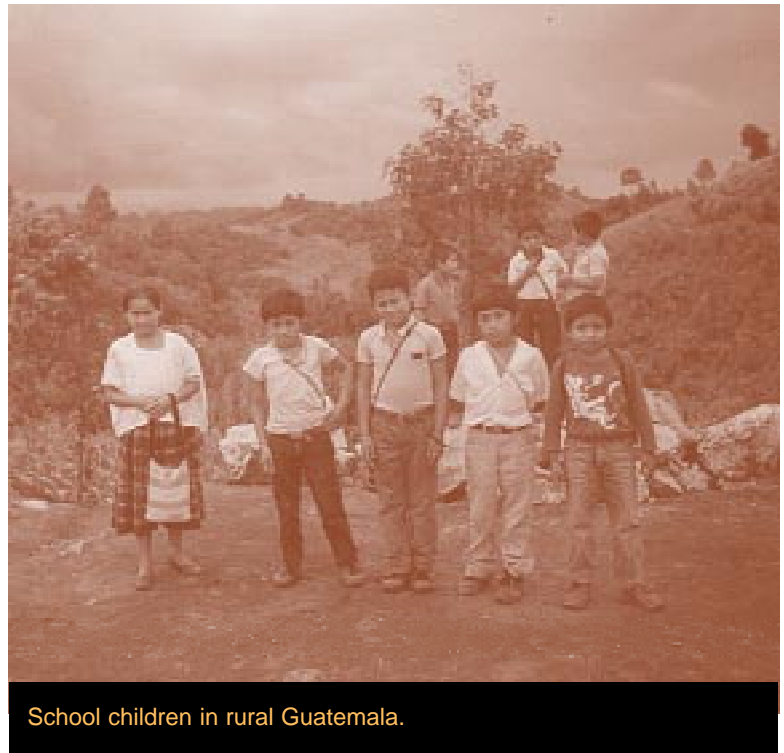
# IEQ in Guatemala

## CONTEXT

The Guatemalan Peace Accords, signed in 1996, ended a civil war that lasted for more than three decades. A key component of the Peace Accords is the construction of an equitable, multicultural, and multi-ethnic society to overcome previous discrimination against minority cultural and linguistic groups, such as the country's diverse Mayan communities. Bilingual intercultural education is seen as one means to achieve this goal. However, the bilingual education program to date has reached only a small portion of the Mayan population.

In 1997, the Government of Guatemala and USAID agreed to work together to expand and improve the quality of bilingual intercultural education. An important part of the improvement was the determination of the educational status of Mayan communities and the identification of effective applications of bilingual multicultural education that would contribute to the goals of the Peace Accords. There was, and still is, a critical need for information on education among Mayan populations in rural areas.

In Guatemala, IEQ aims to strengthen the Directorate of Bilingual Intercultural Education (DIGEBI) as a focal point for bilingual intercultural education policy development and coordination in the Ministry of Education. This activity supports USAID/Guatemala's *Strategic Objective (SO) 2: Better Educated Rural*



School children in rural Guatemala.

*Society*, and the *Intermediate Result 3: Education policies and strategies that enhance gender equity and cultural pluralism are implemented*. Also, it builds on IEQ activities in Guatemala conducted under the first IEQ contract.

The IEQ Guatemala host country research team consists of a core team of two local researchers supported by short-term data collectors trained in field methods. IEQ is working closely with DIGEBI and will begin collaborating with local NGOs later in 1999.

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**KEY WORDS:** primary education, bilingual intercultural education, education indicators, research capacity building.

### PURPOSE AND ACTIVITIES

The IEQ team is assisting the DIGEBI to develop indicators for assessing bilingual education by adapting and modifying the data collection systems currently used by the Ministry of Education to monitor the performance of bilingual schools. IEQ also provides assistance to design a pilot evaluation and monitoring system for bilingual education in the Department of El Quiché, which will serve as a model for creating nationwide indicators to effectively assess performance in bilingual classrooms. IEQ offers technical assistance in applied research on bilingual education issues to Mayan researchers from local organizations and improves the capacity for disseminating research and evaluation findings in formats accessible to the varied members of the education communities with which DIGEBI is involved.

The goals of this effort are to build local capacity to analyze and assess aspects of schooling that affect the quality of bilingual education service delivery and to further the dialogue among all stakeholders on educational quality for children in bilingual/intercultural settings.

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# IEQ in Guinea

## CONTEXT

Guinea is still recovering from more than two decades of dictatorial rule that lasted until 1984. Since then, the country has undergone dramatic civil transformation by adopting a new constitution in 1990 in order to guarantee social and political freedom and by attempting to restructure the education system to better serve all citizens. In response to the government's 1989 National Education Policy, the *Programme d'Adjustment Sectoriel de L'Education* (PASE), was designed. PASE addressed the urgent need for a complete reform of the educational system and focused on increasing access to primary education and improving the administration of education. In 1996, the Government of Guinea reaffirmed its commitment to the objectives of PASE and extended the program as PASE II, which will continue until 2000. PASE II emphasizes educational quality in addition to continuing support for increased access to primary education.

USAID supports PASE through the Guinea Education Sector Reform Program and the Fundamental Quality and Equity Levels Activity. USAID focuses on improving instructional quality through in-service teacher training and providing assistance to the National Pedagogical Institute to develop low-cost quality teaching manuals and student materials.

The textbook is a central ingredient in instructional quality in Guinea. IEQ assisted the Ministry of Pre-University Education (MEPU) by designing and conducting an assessment of school textbook and management. This activity supports USAID/Guinea's *Strategic Objective* (SO) 3: *Increased Enrollment in Primary Schools, with Emphasis on Rural and Female Participation*.

## PURPOSE AND ACTIVITY

This IEQ activity provided decision-makers in Guinea with analytic information to introduce and monitor innovations in the country's textbook distribution system. Several sponsors have supported textbook production and acquisition since 1990, but they have experienced difficulties in distribution and management. Consequently, USAID/Guinea solicited IEQ to provide technical assistance to answer four key questions:

- ▶ What were the practices and policies for acquiring and distributing textbooks since 1990?
- ▶ What were the different strategies, how were they implemented, and with what results?
- ▶ What roles did the different participants play, at different levels, in providing for the supply, distribution, and management of textbooks?
- ▶ What are the current and future implication for providing for availability, accessibility, and use of textbooks in Guinean schools?

A Guinean and IEQ research team contacted over 1,500 education providers and stakeholders to assess Guinea's primary and secondary education textbook distribution, for the period 1990-1998. The activity concluded with a consultative symposium, involving a broad range of government, non-government, private sector, and donor representatives, resulting in the production of priority recommendations for textbook policy, planning, organization, and operations management.

[Guinea is]  
... attempting to  
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education system to  
better serve all citizens.

## TIME PERIOD

The IEQ-supported assessment began in May 1998. The findings were presented at the consultative symposium on July 4 in Conakry. The final report was completed in the field by local researchers in July 1998.

## OUTCOMES AND PRODUCTS

Products resulting from IEQ activities in Guinea include a *Final Report: Analysis of Textbook Distribution in the Republic of Guinea* (English and French), an *Executive Summary* (English and French), and an *Activity Report on the Symposium on Textbook Management and Distribution* (English and French). The study included recommendations encompassing textbook acquisition, publication, production, distribution, use, and protection that have informed planning for textbook management in Guinea. Moreover, the study found that, since 1991, the Ministry has needed to develop a national textbook policy. In the absence of such policy guidance, difficulties and losses have occurred at each juncture of the system, as documented by the study. The study recommendations serve as the elements of the policy. The report also offers steps for developing the national textbook policy.

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**KEY WORDS:** textbook management and distribution, public-private partnerships, operations research.

# Global Information Networks In Education (GINIE)

## CONTEXT

Problems of chronic educational and economic stress threaten basic education in many parts of the world. The good work that has been accomplished over the last few decades needs to be strengthened to build stable democracies, generate innovative market economies, and prevent civil crises. Educational professionals within and across countries need rapid access to professional counterparts' knowledge and expertise. A practical focus is needed around what works "on the ground."

This activity supports Center for Human Capacity Development's *Strategic Objective (SO) 1: Improved and Expanded Basic Education and Learning Systems*. It is directly related to *Intermediate Results 1- 3: Models of community education and crisis response described and disseminated*.

## PURPOSE AND ACTIVITIES

The Global Information Networks In Education (GINIE) Project is an Internet-centered professional development network designed for education professionals working in nations in crisis and transition. It focuses on improving the quality of the education profession struggling on the front lines of crises: for the next generation. GINIE's purpose is to help education professionals build normalcy, continuity, and momentum in local communities and countries where generational continuity and civility is threatened.

GINIE provides rapid access to high-quality education knowledge and expertise related to the improvement of both basic education (literacy, numeracy, and recreation) and supplemental programs related to crises (e.g., personal and public health, psycho-social, economic, and environmental issues).

GINIE's purpose is to publish the "good news" about what works. It uses collegial approaches to collect, analyze, and share

*GINIE's purpose is to publish the "good news" about what works.*

practical educational knowledge created by field-oriented professionals for local use. It draws on expertise through peer learning and distance mentoring to help improve local professional capacities in areas such as "assessment literacy" and participative planning in community-based schools.

## TIME PERIOD

USAID's initial support for GINIE continues through July 1999.

## OUTCOMES AND PRODUCTS

GINIE addresses the growing intersection of development and humanitarian issues related to education and generational continuity.

GINIE contains professional development materials related to:

- ▶ Improving Educational Quality project (educational reform efforts in primary and early childhood education, adult literacy, health education, and community development)
- ▶ Education for Peace and Reconciliation for Societies in Crisis
- ▶ Land Mine Awareness Education
- ▶ Programme for Education for Emergencies and Reconstruction (PEER)
- ▶ Trauma and Disability Education
- ▶ A searchable database with easy uploading features so professionals can contribute their work from their computer
- ▶ Discussion Forums by region and theme.

GINIE also contains assessment tools and policy, program, and training materials, as well as links related to the improvement of educational quality in countries in crisis, including:

- ▶ 'World class' links to organizations and websites with policy and programmatic expertise
- ▶ Regional and country pages with education and background links
- ▶ Reference pages that reduce search time for busy professionals working in education internationally
- ▶ Development databases
- ▶ Education databases
- ▶ News databases
- ▶ Guidance on the use of Internet, including in the classroom.

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**KEY WORDS:** countries in crisis and transition, education resources network, internet-based professional development.

## TIME PERIOD

IEQ work in Guatemala began in June 1998. It is an anticipated five-year effort.

## OUTCOMES AND PRODUCTS

These activities will build a learning capacity in Guatemala to better understand and act up the key factors that affect performance in bilingual education. The findings will also inform policy and planning decisions related to bilingual intercultural education.

The IEQ Guatemala team prepared a *Situational Analysis of Education in El Quiché* comparing education in Guatemala using Ministry of Education data. This report has redefined several indicators of quality, including teacher-student ratios, to reflect more appropriately the reality of Mayan communities. Members of the Guatemala team and a representative of DIGEBI presented a paper entitled *Círculos de Calidad de Maestros: Una metodología para descentralizar la capacitación de maestros* (Teacher Quality Circles: A Methodology for Decentralizing Teacher Training) at a regional conference on education reform in January 1999. The paper will be published by the Inter-American Development Bank in the conference proceedings. A baseline study on classroom practice in the department of El Quiché has been completed, and data are currently being analyzed. Instruments developed by IEQ in Guatemala include school mapping tools, observation forms, and interview guides.

*Instruments developed by IEQ in Guatemala include school mapping tools, observation forms, and interview guides.*

## CONTEXT

For more than a decade, efforts to reform education in Haiti have been constrained by a lack of in-depth information on classroom conditions. Now as the donor community and the government begin a new series of educational initiatives, the need for empirical data is greater than ever. To address this need, IEQ has been working for the past year on a study of educational quality in Haitian primary schools.

This activity supports USAID/Haiti's *Strategic Objective (SO) 3: Promote Healthier, Smaller and Better-Educated Families*, which was in effect in 1997 when IEQ began work in Haiti. The study is being implemented in collaboration with a team of local research specialists from *Fondation Haitienne de l'Enseignement Prive* (FONHEP)

## PURPOSE AND ACTIVITIES

The IEQ study examined the conditions for teaching and learning in sixteen Haitian primary schools (5 public, 11 private) currently participating in the USAID-sponsored Education 2004 project. Data were collected through interviews with parents, teachers, and principals; classroom observations; and assessments of students' performance in French, Creole, and mathematics.

IEQ collaborated with FONHEP to design a data collection strategy and to train researchers in data collection and analysis methods. IEQ researchers also assisted with data analysis and provided feedback to address revisions in the final report prepared by FONHEP.

## TIME PERIOD

IEQ's work in Haiti began in August 1997. The FONHEP team completed the final report in February 1999.

## OUTCOMES AND PRODUCTS

Products resulting from IEQ activities in Haiti include a *Data Analysis Report* and a *Data Collection Training Manual*. The study highlights the lack of adequate physical infrastructure and poor teaching/learning practices in participating schools. Most classrooms were found to be overcrowded and bereft of educational materials. Teachers focus on didactic teaching and spend much of their time in class addressing discipline. (The practice of corporal punishment appears widespread.) Little student-centered learning takes place and the special needs of girl students are generally overlooked. Parents are eager to obtain an education for their children, but have little voice in school policy and lack a clear understanding of what quality education means.

A local consultative group meeting is scheduled for April to review the results of the IEQ study and make recommendations regarding how the findings can be used to help inform education policy dialogue.

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KEY WORDS: classroom practices, NGO capacity, policy dialogue

# IEQ in Malawi

## CONTEXT

Malawi currently faces the combined challenge of guaranteeing all primary school-age children the right to attend school within a system ill-equipped to meet their instructional needs and improving the quality of education. More than 1.3 million additional children came to school following the declaration of Free Primary Education in 1994. Yet, even with donor assistance and Government increase in budgetary allocation to primary education, the system struggles. USAID supports the Government through the Girls' Attainment in Basic Literacy and Education (GABLE) program, which seeks to increase: enrollment and persistence of girls in primary school through social mobilization; efficiency within the primary education sector; and investment in schools and teacher training facilities. Several projects are supported through this program.

IEQ/Malawi is collaborating with the Malawi Institute of Education (MIE) and Save the Children/US to support USAID's *Strategic Objective 4: Increased Access to and Quality and Efficiency of Basic Education, Especially for Girls*. We will contribute to Intermediate Results (IR) 4.1: *Effective Schools Developed in Targeted Areas (Sub IR.4.1.1 Improved Teaching & Learning and Sub IR 4.1.2 Improved Support Systems and IR4.2 Linkage to Policy Reforms and Investment Strategy)*.

## PURPOSE AND ACTIVITIES

The initial research agenda for IEQ/Malawi is linked to Save the Children/US's QUEST (Quality Education Through Supporting Teaching) program. QUEST builds upon the popular and successful Village Based Schools by working at the district level with partners from the Ministry of Education's Primary Education Advisors (PEAs) and teachers. QUEST continues to focus on the school and classroom by providing frequent supervision and training support to teachers and communities,

and by strengthening the skills at the zone, cluster, and school levels. This represents a decentralized approach to fostering educational quality. IEQ will also collaborate with their partners in Malawi to build professional development programs that strengthen professional capacity to conduct qualitative and multi-method research. In addition to the research agenda linked to QUEST, IEQ will also work with Malawi partners to plan a long-term research agenda.

IEQ/Malawi's research team consists of educators from Save the Children, MIE, the Centre for Research & Training (CERT), and several university and teacher training institutions. The team is examining the implementation and effects of the QUEST program, which began in January 1999. The activities include: measuring pupil proficiency in Chichewa, English and mathematics for standards 2-4; identifying teacher knowledge and skills in English and mathematics; observing classroom teaching and learning; surveying availability and use of instructional materials; and interviewing teachers, headteachers, and community members.

## TIME PERIOD

Following discussions with Save the Children in mid-November 1998, IEQ met with SC/US, MIE, CERT, and others in Malawi to finalize the research agenda, identify team leaders, construct instruments for pilot testing, and prepare materials for training team members for baseline data collection. The baseline data were collected from 65 schools in Mangochi and comparison schools in Balaka; data will be analyzed in the spring of 1999. IEQ/Malawi anticipates a three-year partnership.

## OUTCOMES AND PRODUCTS

Products to date include: a Memorandum of Understanding with the Malawi Institute of Education; an Assessment Manual for administering pupil proficiency measures in Chichewa, English and Mathematics for Standards 2,3,4 (including the pupil performance measures); a classroom observation instrument; instructional materials and school facilities surveys; and interview protocols for teachers, headteachers, and community members. Through IEQ, collaborative linkages have been forged among many key stakeholders in Malawi education.

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**KEY WORDS:** classroom practices, pupil assessment, teacher skills and knowledge.

*This represents a  
decentralized  
approach to fostering  
educational quality.*

# Africa Bureau Basic Education Support Project

## CONTEXT

In Africa less than one out of four children completes primary school, and among the minority who do finish, a large proportion have not mastered the basic learning skills of reading, writing, and mathematics needed to access opportunities for further learning. USAID's Africa Bureau, Office of Sustainable Development (AFR/SD), with technical support provided through the IEQ Project, develops and promotes education reform strategies, approaches, and methods that aim to strengthen specific USAID-supported national education reform efforts. The Africa Bureau is now supporting basic education reform in ten countries (Ethiopia, Uganda, Malawi, Zambia, South Africa, Namibia, Benin, Ghana, Mali, and Guinea) as well as through regional associations and networks.

## PURPOSE AND ACTIVITIES

The central focus of IEQ's assistance to the Africa Bureau is the support of country capacity and initiatives in mobilizing internal resources and capacity to provide quality basic education to their children.<sup>1</sup> During 1997 and 1998, IEQ led and coordinated the effort of USAID, in consultation with a large number of development partners including—Ministries of Education, the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA), the World Bank, UNICEF, bilateral education aid agencies, NGOs, and contractors—to formulate and disseminate *USAID's Strategic Framework for Basic Education in Africa*. The strategic framework builds upon ten years of experience within African countries to define the issues that USAID should analyze and account for in the design, implementation, and evaluation of its assistance to basic education. The framework provides three foci as the basis for determining program objectives and allocating funds:

- ◆ Does the program focus on effective schools?
- ◆ Does the program promote systemic reform?
- ◆ Are the reforms and activities sustainable?

<sup>1</sup> From *USAID's Strategic Framework for Basic Education in Africa*. USAID, Africa Bureau, 1998.

The Africa Bureau's project with IEQ works to support, disseminate, implement and further develop this framework through four technical areas:

1. **Strengthen and build technical capacity of USAID staff and partners.** IEQ provides guidance, orientation, and training as a part of the ongoing technical support to the Africa Bureau. Also, each year the Africa Bureau education team, with support from IEQ, reviews all country basic education programs (through the R4 process: results review and resource requests). This provides an opportunity to learn from the experiences within each country as missions work to support national basic education reform. This review is increasingly focused on issues of school effectiveness, classroom impacts, and student learning, which are at the core of IEQ's activity.
2. **Provide technical services to USAID Missions, and to the Africa Bureau,** in developing sector assessments, strategies, program designs, and evaluations. During this past year, the project has carried out field work to assist with Mission design and program reviews in Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea, Malawi, South Africa, Uganda, Zambia, and Liberia (where the trip was cut short due to hostilities).
3. **Carry out analytic and research activities.** The Africa Bureau has identified five key areas for analytic and research activities, based on input from Missions, key partners, and professionals. These are the improvements of: 1) the education reform and policy formulation process; 2) the management of education systems and sector support; 3) teaching and learning capacity; 4) the design and implementation of equity-enhancing policies, programs, and strategies; and 5) internal efficiency (reduction of dropout and repetition). The IEQ Project, with AFR/SD has provided technical support to manage, produce, and disseminate a number of analytical and research products.
4. **Provide technical support to regional organizations,** particularly to the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA) and its working groups. AFR/SD, with IEQ support, provides technical input to ADEA organization and technical activities, such as the current survey of good practices in Africa that will be presented at the 1999 biennial conference in Cape Town as well as to working groups. The ADEA and its working groups provide an excellent professional network of policymakers and technical persons, both from within countries and within the donor and partner agencies that support basic education. This year IEQ is assisting in organizing a project to provide Internet connectivity to Ministries of Education and institutions within African countries that are active in ADEA and its working groups. This activity will assist in strengthening the professional and policy environment that supports educational reform.

## OUTCOME AND PRODUCTS

The IEQ project's goal of improving quality by focusing on the teaching and learning processes within the classroom and school has aided the Africa Bureau in formulating the Strategic Framework, while also benefitting from the policy and program environment that Africa Bureau activities support and develop. With support from IEQ, AFR/SD has produced numerous research publications, including:

- ◆ *Kids, Schools and Learning: African Success Stories*. (Multon et al.) Accounts of basic education reforms in six countries in which USAID has

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# IEQ in Uganda

## CONTEXT

Since 1992, the Government of Uganda has embarked upon a long-term effort to rehabilitate primary education. USAID and the World Bank, working in collaboration with the Government, have defined long-term support for a program of education reform that places priority on the rehabilitation of basic education. The Support for Ugandan Primary Education Reform (SUPER) program is a result of this endeavor. SUPER improves the management of the education system by supporting the government's efforts to decentralize resources and increasing accountability at the district and school levels. It has done this in part by training teachers and district-level officials. SUPER aims to improve basic education for more Ugandan children by: ameliorating teacher training through a Teacher Development and Management System (TDMS); increasing the availability of primary schooling to cover all school-aged children; improving support for girls' participation in primary schooling; and rehabilitating schools and teachers' colleges.

IEQ develops research capacity in interpretive methods, participatory learning, and action research techniques in Uganda. This activity supports USAID/Uganda's *Strategic Objective (SO) 3: Quality Basic Education for an Increased Percent of Ugandan Children* and builds upon work begun under the first IEQ contract, which served to provide baseline data for illuminating the reform process and building local research capacity. IEQ activities also directly support the Ugandan education reform that aims to enhance community participation in educational quality and equity.

The Ugandan National Examination Board (UNEB) is managing the IEQ research. There are ten core team members who represent other Ugandan institutions such as Makerere University; ITEK (Institute of Teacher Education, Kyambogo); TDMS/SUPER Project/USAID; and the District Education Office (DEO). The core research team consists of Site Researchers, a County Inspector, a TDMS Coordinating Centre Tutor, a Research Leader, a Principal Investigator, and a Research Advisor.

## PURPOSE AND ACTIVITIES

IEQ research in Uganda investigates the possibilities and complexities of initiating a participatory process to improve educational quality. Researchers and community members use interpretive data collection and participatory action and learning techniques to understand perspectives of quality learning and community participation in three schools in rural Kazo County. The research process is iterative, whereby community members assess their situation, act on findings, and reflect on the results. Note that not only teachers but community members are contributing to the research. These grassroots researchers are teachers, parents, and pupils. The participatory principles that guide the work are volunteerism, local knowledge and involvement, flexibility, inclusiveness, and the capacity to take on multiple perspectives.

## TIME PERIOD

Community work began in April 1998 and will continue until September 1999.

## OUTCOMES AND PRODUCTS

Building research capacity among the UNEB researchers and local community members and generating findings to inform primary education policy and planning is a top priority. In addition, findings about the community were presented at three forums. Selected teachers, parents, and pupils met with local, district, and national leaders to discuss their groups' work regarding improving education quality. They reported on conditions for quality learning, investigations on pupil absenteeism, pupil evaluation, and peer assistance. The confidence with which teachers, parents, and pupils presented their perspectives to district and national education stakeholders is a significant outcome.

Products to be developed by IEQ in Uganda include: A guide tentatively entitled *Initiating a Participatory Process to Improving Education Quality: Principles, Guidelines and Tools*, a research paper, and a case study reporting on community perspectives of quality learning.

## LOCAL RESEARCH TEAM:

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## U.S. BASED RESEARCH TEAM:

Nancy Clair, Senior Research Advisor, IEQ/Education Development Center

For additional information about IEQ's work in Uganda, please contact the IEQ Uganda research team:

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**Key Words:** participatory research, community participation, primary education, action research capacity building.

# IEQ Exchanges

## EXPLORING PARTICIPATION AS A METHOD TO IMPROVE EDUCATION QUALITY: INITIAL FINDINGS FROM UGANDA

IEQ researchers Dr. Lawrence Kanyike and Dr. Joseph Carasco of the Uganda National Examinations Board (UNEB) and Dr. Nancy Clair of the Education Development Center (EDC) gave presentations at the Education Development Center in Newton, MA, on February 25, the American Institutes for Research in Arlington, VA, on March 2,

and the 20th Annual Ethnography and Education Research Forum hosted by the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia, PA, on March 4, 1999. The team members discussed their latest activities under the IEQ Uganda project. Using Participatory Learning and Action (PLA) methodologies, the team works with teachers, parents, and pupils in three schools to analyze problems related to educational quality and to find solutions. Students chose to promote the qualities they associated with "good" students by periodically appointing model students; teachers came up with tools to identify weaknesses in their teaching methods through peer visitation, student evaluations, and self evaluations; parent groups worked toward a definition of "quality education" using Venn diagrams, mapping techniques, and listing their children's activities during waking hours to determine how their time is spent.

## Calendar

July 1997. Workshop for Latin American educators in Mexico focusing on classroom observation.

July 1997. Conference presentation on IEQ II at the *USAID/HCD Conference for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* in Washington, DC.

September 1997. Conference and meeting of Step-by-Step teams in Lake Ohrid, Macedonia, focusing on the impact of the program on community development, families, and children.

January 1998. *The Uganda National Examinations Board (UNEB) IEQ Project National Workshop* in Jinja, Uganda.

March 1998. Session on "Creating Knowledge for Education Change in Different Cultural Contexts" at the *Comparative and International Education Society (CIES) Conference*, Buffalo, NY.

April 1998. *The Participatory Action Research Workshop* held in Kazo, Morara District.

June 1998. Paper entitled "Learning for All: Policy Dialogue for Achieving Educational Quality" presented at the *International Working Group in Education (IWGE)* in Munich, Germany.

July-Sept 1998. Community group meetings to report to national and regional education stakeholders in three school sites in Uganda: Kazo Model PS, Rwemikoma PS, and Kyabahura PS.

July 1998. Paper entitled "From Baseline to Insight: A Look at the Process of Change through Uganda's Improving Educational Quality (IEQ II) Project" at *World Congress on Comparative Education* in Capetown, South Africa.

July 1998. *National Symposium on Textbook Distribution and Management*, Conakry, Guinea.

October 1998. *Symposium on Rural Child Rearing Practices*, San Salvador, El Salvador.

January 1999. Paper entitled "Círculos de Calidad de Maestros: Una metodología para descentralizar la capacitación de maestros" presented at the *Conference on Education Reform in Central America, Panama, and the Dominican Republic*, San Salvador, El Salvador.

March 1999. "Improving Educational Quality: A Look at the Process of Change in Three Ugandan Schools" Presentation at the *20th Annual Ethnography and Education Research Forum*, Philadelphia, PA.

IEQ Exchange on IEQ research in Uganda at EDC and AIR.

March 8, 1999. IEQ Exchange on *District Development Support Program (DDSP) for Primary Education* at AIR.

April 13, 1999. IEQ Haiti-sponsored in-country consultative meeting to review report on need for quality improvements in Haitian primary schools.

April 14-18, 1999. IEQ panels and presentations at *Comparative and International Education Society (CIES) Conference*, Toronto:

- ♦ *The Fundamental Quality Level Indicator Model for Primary Schools* (panel).
- ♦ *The Politics of Implementing Education Reforms in Africa* (panel).
- ♦ *Disconnects and Connections in Teaching for Quality Education: Issues Across Continents* (panel).
- ♦ *The Voice of the Child: Community Centered Development and Education Reform* (paper).
- ♦ *USAID's Strategic Framework for Basic Education in Africa: A Development Approach to Systemic, Sustainable, and Effective Basic Education Reform in Africa* (panel).
- ♦ *Education and Democracy* (panel).

April 26-30, 1999. IEQ Guatemala-sponsored conference on intercultural bilingual education (tentative) in El Quiché.

IEQ hosted a presentation by Dr. Faroon Goolam on March 8, 1999, at the American Institutes for Research. Dr. Goolam works with USAID/South Africa and is responsible for the management of the District Development Support Project (DDSP) in KwaZulu Natal Province. The presentation discussed the strategy for USAID's Results Package for basic education and the initial implementation of the strategy in provinces where USAID works in basic education. DDSP's goals are to build alliances and greater discourse within regional and sub-regional structures. Better dialogue could positively change districts, circuits, clusters, and schools, and thus enable the effective implementation of Curriculum 2005, a new educational curriculum attempting to foster skills that can be applied in the real world of work.

provided assistance.

- ▶ *Formulating Education Policy: Lessons and Experiences from Sub-Saharan Africa* (ADEA). Six case studies and an analytic overview commissioned by ADEA with AFR/SD technical support.
- ▶ *How Educating a Girl Changes the Woman She Becomes: An Intergenerational Study in Northern Ghana* (Wolf and Odonkor). Documents the argument that women's participation in nonformal education and other associations has the same effect as formal schooling on demographic change.
- ▶ *Planning for Community Participation in Education*. (Wolf et al.) Interactive computer application with information on community school programs. Cases are organized by goals, strategies, and contexts.
- ▶ *ED\*ASSIST*. A Windows-based software system designed for the collection, processing, and reporting of educational data, and for the planning and management of these activities. ED\*ASSIST provides a baseline of proven standard software and a collection of standards and illustrative examples and tools to shorten and improve the education data collection and reporting cycle.
- ▶ *Where Policy Hits the Ground: Policy Implementation Processes in Malawi and Namibia*. (Wolf et al.). A study of barriers to policy implementation examined through the perspective and experience of teachers, pupils, parents, and local actors.

For additional information on IEQ's support to the Africa Bureau, please contact:

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**KEY WORDS:** basic education, sustainability, school effectiveness, technical assistance.

### IEQ Funding Agency & Partners

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### Greeting from the Editors

Welcome to the first issue of the **IEQ Quality Link!** This newsletter encourages communication and shares information about IEQ among educators and researchers in IEQ countries, and the wider international community. Each newsletter will update what IEQ is doing and learning, as well as additional information on educational quality of interest to educators and the worldwide development community.

We hope that you will find this newsletter interesting and informative. Please contact us with any comments, suggestions, or questions you may have regarding **The Quality Link**.

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