

# EQ Review

Educational Quality in the Developing World



*EQ Review is a newsletter published by USAID's EQUIPI to share knowledge about issues fundamental to improving educational quality and to communicate the successes, challenges, and lessons learned by USAID Missions.*

January 2005

Vol. 3, No. 1

## Public-Private Partnerships for Educational Quality

### USAID's Office of Global Development Alliances

The USAID Global Development Alliance (GDA) is the functional bureau charged with practicing and mainstreaming the public-private partnership development assistance model at all levels of the Agency. This model reflects the emergence of private sector entities as active participants in the development process.

Certain elements are common to alliances:

- The belief that a partnership will be more effective than a standalone approach;
- A joint definition of the problem and a shared solution;
- The commitment of resources by all partners;
- And shared risks and rewards.

As donor organizations, private companies and others increasingly work together, the spread of public-private alliances suggests a changed role for USAID. More effective use of U.S. foreign aid creates stability and increases opportunities for citizens in developing countries. These alliances allow USAID and private organizations to accomplish more in concert than they could separately.

Public-private alliances are typically characterized by a 1:1 leverage of public and private funds. While not all alliances can reach a full 1:1 leverage, many more alliances exceed this threshold.

The primary programmatic interventions practiced by the GDA business model in the education sector include

*Continued on p.3*

### Global Learning Portal Links Educators for Professional Development

In most developing countries, education and training systems lack sufficient human capacity to provide quality services. Many countries suffer from teacher shortages due to factors such as low national budgets, a graying teacher cadre, HIV/AIDS, and conflict. Moreover, often those educators left behind are not adequately prepared to be teachers, typically having only a primary school level education with little or no pre-service or in-service education. Thus, education quality at the classroom level suffers.

The Global Learning Portal (GLP; see [www.glpnet.org](http://www.glpnet.org)) provides a cost-effective way to provide pre-service and in-service education for teachers at all levels. The GLP facilitates direct contact between educators, groups of educators, and institutions, removing unnecessary intermediaries. By linking educators together, the GLP fosters a "self-healing network" where educators can resolve many of their own problems. As one teacher in Kampala, Uganda states, "The Global Learning Portal is helping us as teachers a lot. It has widened our spheres of communication. Through it, teachers are able to share a wide range of ideas on current issues. This in turn has made teachers' lives easier in the classroom because they are able to answer students' numerous questions."

The GLP evolves to provide a personalized web portal because its customizable user interface adapts itself to the needs and skills of the user. For example, an educator who has registered as a Spanish-speaking primary school teacher interested in science will receive information about relevant

*Continued on p.4*

# Public-Private Partnerships

## “Takalani Sesame” in South Africa

The *Sesame Street* “experiment” began in the United States in 1968 with grants from the U.S. Office of Education, the Carnegie Corporation and the Ford Foundation that established a non-profit organization then known as Children’s Television Workshop (CTW) and now known as Sesame Workshop. Today, *Sesame Street* is a shared experience for children throughout the world.

In response to international desire to duplicate the *Sesame Street* success and impact in local contexts, Sesame Workshop devised a flexible co-production plan and business approach that continues to adapt to meet the varying educational, economic and broadcast needs of individual countries.

In South Africa, a lack of available preschool education (only one in six children has access to formal schooling) was the catalyst for creating a multimedia educational initiative to promote literacy and numeracy among young people as well as to develop a positive self-esteem and self-image, to respect and appreciate others, and to celebrate South Africa’s diverse culture.

As a first step, in 1993 Sesame Workshop received grants from Ford and Kellogg Foundations for a fellowship program to bring six black South Africans to Sesame Workshop for training in various aspects of children’s educational media. The success of the fellowship program led to substantial support from USAID/South Africa, through a bi-lateral agreement with the South African Department of Education, to develop the educational program known as Takalani Sesame.

USAID provided funds to pioneer the initiative that included television, radio, and an extensive outreach program to reach children most in need. The South African Broadcasting Company (SABC) stepped in and became the critical media partner and delivery vehicle for both the television and radio series. Sanlam Life provided the largest sponsorship package in its history and received underwriting sponsorship credit on air and on all the outreach materials. Additional support was received from the Rockefeller Brothers Fund and the Rockefeller Foundation as well as from South African Airways. Thus, a public/private partnership was born.

The Takalani Sesame series premiered in August 2000 and has aired daily on SABC television and on the radio. An independent impact assessment conducted on the first



season of Takalani Sesame revealed that children aged 3-6 years of age that were exposed to the show had measurably improved life skills such as positive self-esteem and self-image, while the younger children (under the age of 5) had substantial gains in literacy and numeracy skills. The success of the project can be attributed in large part to Sesame Workshop’s capacity building efforts at a local level.

In 2002, Sesame Workshop, responding to a request from its partners and support from USAID, joined the global fight against HIV/AIDS by developing the first HIV/AIDS curriculum for preschool children – and introduced to the world the newest member of the Sesame Muppet family, Kami who is HIV positive. This model and the impact it had was so successful that Sesame Workshop, USAID, South Africa’s Department of Education, Sanlam, and SABC joined forces again to produce the next phase of the project. Sesame Workshop is currently in discussions with partners to extend Takalani Sesame for another five years.

Takalani Sesame is an example of a successful public/private partnership. Each of the partners shares the vision and realizes the potential of the project to educate South African children. This contributes to overall project sustainability.

More information about Takalani Sesame can be found at [www.equip123.net/EQ\\_Review/docs/pp-sesame.pdf](http://www.equip123.net/EQ_Review/docs/pp-sesame.pdf) or by contacting Sibusiso Sithole at [ssithole@usaid.gov](mailto:ssithole@usaid.gov).

# Public-Private Partnerships

## Peru: Alliances to Improve Reading and Writing in Public Schools

In Peru, where public expenditure for education averages about US\$ 300 per student, it is not possible to improve quality of education without the involvement of both the public and the private sector.

Since Sept 2002, USAID has supported the establishment of the Andean Center of Excellence for Teaching Training (CETT) in three countries (Peru, Bolivia and Ecuador) through an alliance of three universities under the leadership of the Cayetano Heredia University in Lima. The Andean CETT is one of three Centers of Excellence, a U.S. Presidential Initiative announced by George W. Bush in the Americas Summit in 2001. The goal of the Andean CETT is to strengthen reading instruction and increase the reading and writing skills of primary school students throughout the region. The Andean CETT has developed and tested an innovative, yet practical, methodology that allows teachers to effectively teach children to read and write. This methodology has collected lessons learned and best practices from the Americas.

Last year, the Andean CETT, with the support of the non-governmental organization INMED Partnerships for Children, launched a strategy to build public-private alliances to improve reading and writing instruction. This is a key element for education quality improvement, since most children in the region finish primary school without the basic reading skills. In Peru, only 5.8% of 6th grade students in public schools were able to understand what they read, according to a 2001 study. In Ecuador, in a 1997 national evaluation, only 25% of second graders were proficient in reading comprehension. In Bolivia, in 2002, only 10% of second grade students were proficient in reading comprehension.

Peruvian companies and non-profit foundations are responding to CETT's invitation to participate in public-private sector partnerships. Since September 2004, almost \$400,000 in commitments has been made, mostly by the mining sector (Antamina), gas sector (Pluspetrol, Aguaytia Energy) and tourism sector (Lima Tours). Some advances have been made with other companies in Bolivia (Pil) and Ecuador as well.

The CETT partners received kudos last September when the Minister of Education of Peru, the U.S. Ambassador, the USAID Mission Director and businessmen jointly visited a CETT school in Ventanilla, in Northern Lima.

First-grade students read entire sentences and second and third-grade students read their own stories and poems. Visitors chatted with the children about their homes, family life, and classroom experiences. The Minister announced his intention to expand the initiative to other schools. "These are *our* children who are the future of our country," declared Mr. Baertl, one of the businessmen invited, a former CEO of the nation's largest extraction company. "We are delighted to do our part in this important public-private partnership."

A challenge for this year is to develop a model of partnership in two diverse areas of the country, with the involvement of the universities, the Ministry of Education, the local government, the teacher union, non-profit organizations, and local businesses in the area. This is the only way to ensure sustainability of the initiative to improve children's ability to read and write.

Visit the CETT partnership site:

<http://www.readingforallchildren.org>

For more information, please contact Fernando Bolaños [fbolanos@usaid.gov](mailto:fbolanos@usaid.gov).



Ms. Nina Sotomarin, CETT Coordinator, Dr. Javier Sota, Minister of Education, and U.S. Ambassador to Peru J.Curtis Struble with a second grade girl reading her own text. Sept 2004.

*Continued from p.1, USAID GDA*

introducing enabling technologies, using private sector core competencies to more robustly link education with job skills and gainful employment, engaging foundations as partners to build bridges between cultural educational systems, and tapping into myriad resource flows to strengthen education in target countries.

Tools for building alliances can be found on the GDA website ([http://www.usaid.gov/our\\_work/global\\_partnerships/gda/tab.html](http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/global_partnerships/gda/tab.html)).

For more information about USAID's Global Development Alliance, please contact Dan Killian at [dkillian@usaid.gov](mailto:dkillian@usaid.gov).

# Public-Private Partnerships

## Jordan: Partnerships Support Innovative Strategies with ICTs

The government of Jordan is carrying out an ambitious effort to reform education to better prepare students for the knowledge economy. One important aspect of this program, called Education Reform for the Knowledge Economy (ERfKE), seeks to use information and communication technologies (ICTs) to accelerate learning, strengthen pedagogy, increase access to the latest information, implement e-learning components of the curriculum, and strengthen links between schools and the world of work.

USAID/Amman is funding part of the government's reform program through the ERfKE Support Program (ESP), an EQUIP2 project implemented by the Academy for Educational Development (AED). The ESP/AED project team has partnered with Intel Corporation and Microsoft Corporation to carry out pilot activities testing strategies to improve access to ICTs in schools and to better prepare young people for the world of work.

To increase the amount and quality of time students spend with computers, the project is piloting the use of Computers on Wheels (COWs) or movable carts with about 15 laptop computers that use wireless connectivity to create a dynamic classroom network. To carry out this pilot, ESP/AED staff orchestrated a public-private partnership with Intel Corporation. Intel is providing about \$35,000 to supplement USAID funds for this pilot and is contributing Intel staff with engineering and computers-in-education expertise. Intel will also help ESP/AED staff identify and recruit one or two other private companies to join this pilot project. With Intel's support, the project team will be able to implement at least four COWs in different schools in Jordan.

In the second private sector partnership, ESP/AED is working with Microsoft Corporation to test a new strategy for providing technical support to school computer facilities and to help provide youth with ICTs skills that may prepare them for quality jobs after they graduate. As part of ERfKE, Microsoft is helping the Jordanian Ministry of Education establish a centralized ICT help desk system in Amman for schools around the country. Microsoft provided ESP/AED with \$25,000 to partly fund its proposed pilot of a school-based extension of the help desk system using teams of students in grades 9 through 12.

The Student Support Technician (SST) teams consist of students, initially from grades 9 and 11, and their teacher-sponsors. The SST teams will function as the schools' first line of defense for solving computer problems and as the principal points of contact for staff at the national help desk system. The pilot is designed to be a self-replicating activity—at the start of the second year, members of the SST, who will by then be in grades 10 and 12, will train new members from grades 9 and 11. If this pilot is successful, Microsoft will likely implement versions of the activity in other countries where it is helping ministries of education establish national help

desk systems.

More information about Jordan's ERfKE and USAID's ESP can be found at [www.equip123.net/EQ\\_Review/docs/pp-Jordan.pdf](http://www.equip123.net/EQ_Review/docs/pp-Jordan.pdf) or by contacting Maha Al Shaer at [malshaer@usaid.gov](mailto:malshaer@usaid.gov).

*Continued from p.1, GLP Links*

primary level lesson plans and reports as well as invitations to appropriate elementary education and science-related discussion groups in her native language. Currently, the GLP is available in four languages: (1) English, (2) Spanish, (3) French, and (4) Portuguese. And, in 2005, an Arabic Portal will be developed.

The GLP is a Global Development Alliance (GDA) activity that leverages the contributions and efforts of thousands of participants globally from various institutions: schools, USAID missions, NGOs, and the private sector (i.e., businesses). The GLP depends upon the support of local, country, and global partners in the form of technology, finance, operations support, content, and volunteering (e.g., mentoring and moderating groups). Already, the GLP has global public-private partnerships with the International Reading Association (IRA), US Peace Corps, Academy for Educational Development (AED), Sun Microsystems, and USAID, and has local partnerships in the five pilot countries of Brazil, Ethiopia, Nicaragua, South Africa, and Uganda. The collaborative network model of the GLP brings together more human and technical resources to help educators than could any one entity alone. The expertise, content, and financial resources of the partnership contribute to improved education systems in developing countries and, simultaneously, promote the GLP's long-term sustainability.

GLP is a free service to all educators in developing countries and for any individual or institution interested in supporting the goals of Education for All (EFA). Please visit and join at [www.glpnet.org](http://www.glpnet.org). If you have any questions about the GLP, please feel free to contact Suezan Lee at [sulee@usaid.gov](mailto:sulee@usaid.gov) or Bruce Geisert, GLP Director, at [bgeisert@aed.org](mailto:bgeisert@aed.org).

*EQ Review* is a free publication created by the [Educational Quality Improvement Program \(http://www.EQUIP123.net\)](http://www.EQUIP123.net) and the [U.S. Agency for International Development \(USAID\)](http://www.usaid.gov) under cooperative agreement # GDG-A-00-03-00006-00.

To contribute to *EQ Review* please contact:  
Kim Bolyard, [kbolyard@air.org](mailto:kbolyard@air.org), or John Hatch, [jhatch@usaid.gov](mailto:jhatch@usaid.gov).



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE