**EQUIP3 / Youth Trust** is a USAID-funded mechanism created to improve the quality of education and learning opportunities for youth and young adults, with specific expertise in addressing livelihood preparation, youth assessment, and youth involvement. EQUIP3 / Youth Trust is comprised of the Education Development Center, Inc. and 12 partners, who are a cohesive group with diversified capacities and areas of expertise.

### New Feature: Philippines EQuALLS Phase 2 Project

(see page 2 for details)

### Core Award Activities

1. **Youth Participation**

   To foster positive and meaningful youth participation in development programming, EQUIP3 / Youth Trust articulates its approach and activities around key components that aim both to better focus on what youth can do and to create an environment conducive to youth participation.

   A YAC selection committee has been assembled with reviewers from EQUIP3 and USAID, as well as former YAC members who have retired from the committee. The new Youth Advisory Committee members will be announced in September.

2. **Knowledge Dissemination**

   **EQ Review**

   The June 2006 issue focused "Youth Assessments," addressing the role of young people and how they relate to the strategic direction of USAID's work. This publication highlights projects that view youth as assets in strengthening fragile states, ensuring the stability of strategic states, and promoting transformational development in other countries. Projects in Haiti, Iraq, and Angola are featured. Please visit [http://www.equip123.net/EQ_Review/4_3.pdf](http://www.equip123.net/EQ_Review/4_3.pdf).

   **EQUIP3 Website**

   The EQUIP3 team has been working on updates to the Youth Participation page as well as creating a page for our new Associate Award in the Philippines. The updates should be posted by mid September.

3. **Youth and Conflict**

   Marc Sommers, EQUIP3 Youth Research Specialist, has published a new piece titled *Embracing the Margins: Working with Youth Amidst War and Insecurity*. The report, presented at the Brookings Blum Roundtable during a session on Youth Bulges, Disaffection and Conflict, can be found at [www.brookings.edu/global/aspen/5sommers.pdf](http://www.brookings.edu/global/aspen/5sommers.pdf).
Overview
The EQuALLS Phase 2 Program aims to increase access to quality education and livelihood skills in selected areas of the Philippines, particularly those most affected by conflict and poverty. EQUIP3 will work with a broad range of organizations to strengthen formal and non-formal basic education for youth in Muslim areas of Mindanao.

Program Objectives
The EQuALLS Phase 2 Program has the following objectives:

*Increase learning opportunities in Muslim Mindanao*
The EQuALLS 2 Program will target schools, barangays and municipalities to increase access to quality learning in Mindanao. The program will apply a core set of EQuALLS education strategies for in- and out-of-school youth in these targeted areas to improve learning achievement. This approach will include flexible instructional systems and drop-out prevention efforts.

*Strengthen capacity for teaching English, math, and science*
EQuALLS 2 offers support for a systemic effort to improve teacher competencies and learner achievements in English, math, and science across all basic education programs in the Muslim areas of Mindanao, improvements in ALS Instructional Manager skills, and the use of different instructional interventions to reinforce student learning.

*Improve relevance and training for out-of-school children and youth*
EQuALLS 2 will facilitate the development of new instructional programs related to the livelihood and employment needs of out-of-school children and youth (OSCY), the organization of stronger linkages between OSCY education and training programs and the informal and formal private sector, and the development of linkages with skills training programs.

*Build the capacity of key stakeholder organizations to implement and sustain systematic educational improvement*
EQuALLS 2 will build the capacity of a wide range of stakeholder organizations including local parent/teacher associations, regional councils, district and provincial governments, local, regional NGOs, national and regional partnerships, and relevant Departments of Education.

EQuALLS 2 will engage in a collaborative process of institution-building that may include:
- formal and informal training
- internships and mentorships
- on-the-job training
- small-scale organization development grants

EQUIP3 will work with international and Filipino organizations in the implementation of EQuALLS 2. During the first year, prospective partner organizations will be involved in finalizing the strategic and implementation framework for the five year program. Partner organizations will be finalized during the first nine months of the program drawing from current education practitioners in the Philippines.

A more detailed description will be on the EQUIP3 website in the coming weeks. For more information, please contact: Nancy Devine, ndevine@edc.org
The Education for All/Youth Challenge Grant Program (EFA) was created to build the capacity of organizations and agencies to provide relevant skills training for out-of-school youth. It helps USAID Missions analyze and strategically address youth basic education and livelihood issues. The EFA program also helps to build partnerships that address youth issues in an integrated and creative manner. The program is active in three countries:

**EFA Learning & Sharing Component**

*Discussing Community Engagement - Conference Call: Jamaica, South Africa, and Uganda*

The Learning & Sharing Component of the EFA Youth Challenge Grant Program initiated a series of discussions to establish and nurture direct communication and exchange lessons learned among all three projects. Field staff from People’s Action for Community Transformation (PACT) in Jamaica, City Year South Africa (CYSoA) in South Africa, and the Kids League (TKL) Uganda participated in a conference call on August 16, 2006. Since this was the first time that the group (8 participants and 1 facilitator) communicated directly, participants were interested in learning more about each project. To address this interest, part of the conversation was about the nature and scope of each project. However, in order to generate a rich conversation about field work and best practices, the discussion focused on the theme of community engagement, which had been of interest to all three projects as expressed prior to the conference call.

During the discussion, participants shared challenges and success stories about engaging the local community in the project. Overall, it was recognized that community involvement is key to the success of a project but that it requires planning and strategic thinking to achieve it. One of the strategies to promote community participation at the start-up of a project, as was the case in Jamaica, was to gather community leaders to explain the project and its role in the community, and most importantly, to open the floor for discussion and suggestions. Another strategy that has helped to engage the community in South Africa and Uganda was conducting a process of sensitization when coming into a new community. This can help stakeholders at the district, school and community level become interested in the project and identify the benefits that apply to their own work and life. In the case of Uganda, these efforts led to the active involvement of community members as sport coaches in the project. Involving project participants directly with the community, through community service, volunteerism, or tutoring activities in local schools, was another strategy that has helped strengthen the ties between the project and the community in the case of South Africa.

The topic of community engagement merits further discussion. We hope that this initial conversation served as a springboard for future communication and exchange of lessons learned among projects. At the end of the session, participants suggested that conference calls of this nature take place every month or every two months to generate a platform of discussion for other topics that they are interested in.

**EFA Website**

As part of the Learning & Sharing Initiative of the EFA Youth Challenge Grant Program, a website has been developed to share information about the EFA Initiative as well as about each project and various partners among participants and with a broader audience.

You can visit: [http://webdev.efa.edc.org/default.asp](http://webdev.efa.edc.org/default.asp). Please note that this website is currently under review by all project participants and that some sections are still under construction. Please consider this as an invitation to share your feedback and suggestions during this review process. You can send comments to Alejandra Bonifaz at abonifaz@edc.org.
West Bank/Gaza: Palestinian Youth Empowerment Program
Summer Camps for Palestinian Children and Youth

The Ruwwad Palestinian Youth Empowerment Program provided technical, logistical, and financial support to two Palestinian organizations coordinating summer camps for well over 3,500 children and youth throughout the West Bank and Gaza at summer’s end.

The Palestinian Development Forum (PDF) and the Palestine Center for Development, Democracy, and Dialogue (PCD3) coordinated summer camps in over 30 urban and rural communities, operated in many cases by local youth clubs and women’s associations. Young girls and boys, ages 10 to 18, including some with disabilities such as the hearing impaired, participated in variety of activities such as sports, drama, creative writing, poetry reading, dance and field trips that offered relief and diversion from the political, social, and economic hardships faced daily by Palestinian youth.

EQUIP3 Project Director, Paul Sully, visited one ground-breaking summer camp for university-aged girls held at the Fara Training Center. The young women studied leadership, forensics, and communications taught by University professors during an ambitious six am to midnight daily schedule that also included community service activities, art and dance, and lots of time to talk a lot with other girls – a unique atmosphere and opportunity for many of these young women. Paul observed, “I never saw girls in this part of world so animated. Close your eyes and listen to the tone - the shouts, cheers and gleeful banter – more characteristic of a cheerleading camp, not the quiet demur of young woman or angry CNN images that may crowd one’s mental picture.”

For more information, please contact: Chuck Wattles, cwattles@edc.org

Haiti: Out-of-School Youth Livelihood Initiative / IDEJEN

In October 2003 the “Haitian Out-of-School Youth Livelihood Initiative: IDEJEN” was launched by EQUIP3 with support from USAID. The project is designed as a learning project to better understand the situation of out-of-school youth, age 15-20, in Haiti and the approaches for education and livelihood preparation that can be offered to this target group.

USAID shared with EDC the program description for the extension of the project. IDEJEN has submitted a proposal and is awaiting feedback from the mission in Haiti.

Helene Duquette, international consultant, is in Haiti working with a local consultant to assist the IDEJEN team as they prepare documents for an external evaluation. This evaluation is planned for October or

Project Director Melanie Beauvy will be out of the office on maternity leave starting some time in September. While she is away, please contact EQUIP3 International Program Assistant Lisa Austin (laustin@edc.org) or Chief of Party Guerda Previlon (gprevilon@edc.org) for questions related to the IDEJEN project.
The Literacy and Community Empowerment Program (LCEP) provides rural Afghan communities with tools to identify and address their strengths and challenges, develop effective institutions for local governance, and increase economic productivity. It is a community-driven program that supports the articulated learning needs of Afghan communities in the areas of literacy, governance, and economic empowerment. The program also includes strategies to ensure women’s full participation.

LCEP was due to end on 31 October. However, in mid-August, EDC submitted a request for extension of the program through 15 February 2007 in order to complete the current round of ongoing activities, implement a phase out plan, and conduct a series of special studies. Cohort 1 communities (70) finished their full course of literacy instruction in late August; successful graduates of the program will receive government certification equivalent to completion of third grade. Cohort 2 communities (120) are due to complete their cycle of literacy instruction in December. Between September and January 2007, LCEP will work with cohort 1 and 2 communities to determine what aspects of LCEP’s governance, economic empowerment and literacy activities have been most useful for them and to develop a post-LCEP sustainability plan. Also during this time, LCEP will finalize a complete set of curricula and teaching/learning materials in Dari and English and make these available to communities (Dari) and other interested stakeholders (Dari, English).

Also in the closing months of 2006, LCEP will conduct a series of special studies. Possible topics include a comparison group study to determine the impact of literacy activities upon community development; classroom observation studies to better understand literacy teacher and learner behavior in the literacy centers; and a cost-benefit analysis of LCEP’s integrated approach to community development.

For more information, please contact Cornelia Janke. cianke@edc.org

Administrative Updates

Staff Changes
Sarah Hay has joined the GLG Newton staff as an International Program Coordinator. Sarah’s central interests are indigenous education and rights. Sarah has worked or lived in Ecuador, Chile, Colombia, Mexico, Guatemala, Dominica, Nigeria, and South Africa.

Katharine Bennett has completed her internship with EQUIP3 in the DC office. We extend a heartfelt thanks to her for her contributions to our work on service learning and youth participation.

Travel
•Paul Sully is traveling to West Bank/Gaza from August 21st until September 16th.
•Helene Duquette, international consultant, will be in Haiti from September 3-9th.
•EQUIP3 team members from EDC and Chiefs of Party from Associate Award projects were present at the Global Learning Group retreat, held August 7-9th in Newton, MA.