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.

What's New?
The Cross-Sectoral Youth Project is officially launched. See page 2.

Core Award Activities

1. Youth Participation
Fostering positive and meaningful youth participation in development programming.

First Youth Advisory Committee (YAC) Conference Call
The Youth Advisory Committee had their first teleconference on Thursday, October 26th. Present on the call were Sam (Uganda), Catherine (Philippines), Carrie (Kenya) and Adona (Lebanon). During this meeting, Lisa Austin, YAC coordinator, gave them an overview of the structure of EQUIP3 and their role as youth advisors. They all look forward to collaborating with the EQUIP3 team.

2. Reintroducing The Youth Community of Practice (YCOP) Links
Linking professionals and practitioners to help design more effective, sustainable youth programs, and promote youth participation.

YCOP Links has been renamed, and transferred from Gustavo Payan and Alejandra Bonifaz to Charles Wattles and Lisa Austin.

YCOP Links provides a forum for professionals and practitioners at USAID and its partner organizations to gather, consolidate, archive, disseminate and exchange information, knowledge, ideas and best practices, particularly related to the incorporation of youth participation in USAID development projects. The Youth Community of Practice consists of an informal body of volunteer members, including USAID staff, youth practitioners outside of the Agency, and youth themselves. To join YCOP Links, contact Lisa Austin at laustin@edc.org.

3. Journal of Education for International Development

The journal is soliciting contributions for four 2007 issues (one general and three thematic) on six topical areas, which include ‘Life and Work Skills’ and ‘Complementary Education.’ Interested contributors are encouraged to visit the JEID website for further details, or contact JEID Editor at jeid@air.org or dglassman@air.org.

www.EQUIP123.net/JEID
New Cross-Sectoral Youth Project Associate Award Takes Off

Summary of the program
The 18-month, USAID and PACT-funded Cross-Sectoral Youth Project is designed to support and promote USAID field missions’ involvement in cross-sectoral youth-oriented programming. Specifically, the project will strive to offer: guidance in identifying opportunities for cross-sectoral youth programming; technical assistance in the design, management, and assessment of specific activities that can advance such programming; and documentation of successes and lessons learned based on the demonstration sites.

Demonstrating cross-sectoral links through sport and livelihood investments
The demonstration sites include Uganda and India. In Uganda, the project will gauge to what extent a cross cutting sport for development approach can foster positive youth development outcomes in the areas of reproductive health, civil society participation, conflict mitigation, basic education achievement and livelihood preparation. In India, the project will highlight links between investments in youth livelihood development and the achievement of cross-sectoral and sector-specific youth development outcomes in health, education and civic participation.

Rationale behind the project
The project reflects a growing movement away from stove-piping, increasing USAID awareness of the need to more effectively address the role of young people in its strategic direction, and the belief that youth development interventions are often best formulated and structured within a cross-sectoral programming approach.

Partnerships are key
While EDC will serve as the Coordinating Agency, the project both embraces partnerships at various levels and across sectors, and promotes sustainable partnerships. Partners represent diverse agency types including, for example, bilateral donors, ministerial units, private sector enterprise, local NGOs, and local government units. The International Youth Foundation is a key consortium partner in this effort, and will be involved in further promoting cross-sectoral partnerships through building public-private alliances. At the local level, implementing partners include the Urban Health Resource Center (UHRC) in India and The Kids League (TKL) in Uganda. And spanning field missions and headquarter bureaus, several USAID entities will be involved from the Cross-Sectoral Youth Working Group to the Global Development Alliance (GDA), Bureau for Democracy, Conflict and Humanitarian Assistance (DCHA), Bureau for Africa (AFR), and the Bureau for Economic Growth, Agriculture and Trade (EGAT).

Inaugural meeting at USAID
On October 26th, an inaugural meeting was held at USAID to discuss priorities, communication methods, and some hopes and expectations for the effort. From USAID in attendance were: Christine Adamczyk from DCHA, Clare Ignatowski from EGAT/ED, Ishrat Husain from the Bureau for Africa, Jerry O’Brien from GDA. From EQUIP3 were Nancy Devine, David James-Wilson, Alejandra Bonifaz, and Paul Sully. From PACT were David Hoffman and David Jacobstein.

For more information, please contact Alejandra Bonifaz, abonifaz@edc.org
EFA’s Learning & Sharing Component: Discussion on National Youth Service Initiatives

The Learning & Sharing Component of the EFA Youth Challenge Grant Program continued in October with its series of discussions. During these sessions, implementing partners of EFA Jamaica, South Africa and Uganda learn from one another by sharing project characteristics and context, challenges, and successful strategies.

On October 10, 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) in Uganda participated in a conference call to discuss existing national youth service initiatives and their bearing on the EFA projects. PACT described the National Youth Program (NYP) in Jamaica: the NYP, founded in 1969 and re-established in 1994, aims to assist youth in their transition to employment. NYP recruits youth and provides them with activities and training programs that will orient them to working life. The EFA Jamaica project hopes to coordinate activities and build stronger connections with the NYP to provide a greater range of opportunities for youth who graduate from the EFA program.

While the NYP in Jamaica runs direct intervention programs for youth, the National Youth Service (NYS) initiative in South Africa does not implement activities for youth. Instead, it provides a policy framework for youth service programming in South Africa. The NYS provides specific prerequisites that a youth-serving organization has to fulfill in order to register with the NYS. City Year is currently registered with the NYS. One of its strategies to satisfy NYS requirements to maintain its registration is to actively involve the private sector. CYSoA not only requests financial support from the private sector, but it also engages them in the program by requesting learnership opportunities (similar to internships) for participating youth, thereby strengthening the private sector’s commitment to the project and ensuring a minimum number of job placements for graduating youth, one of NYS requirements.

The youth service initiatives of Jamaica and South Africa are both countrywide. Uganda, on the other hand, does not have a national initiative. Instead, youth programs are usually designed based on local community’s priorities and following local government’s guidelines and recommended approaches from the government. Thus, the discussion in the case of Uganda focused on bottom-up initiatives and innovative approaches like EFA Uganda and their potential ability to inform and influence local and eventually regional initiatives in the future. TKL explained that although the EFA project does not count on a specific national framework upon which it can rely, this lack of structure also provides a degree of flexibility in the program that may not otherwise be possible.

Overall, this topic made for an informative discussion that introduced each participant to other countries’ national or local programming frameworks and their relation to the EFA projects. Participants from each implementing organization agreed to share any informative documentation that can complement this discussion and inform their EFA colleagues.

As unanimously agreed by the team, the topic of discussion for the next session will be sustainability: institutional, programmatic, and financial.

For more information, please contact Alejandra Bonifaz, abonifaz@edc.org
West Bank/Gaza: Palestinian Youth Empowerment Program

Empowering youth in the West Bank and Gaza through community involvement in humanitarian services, in preparation for active, productive roles in the working world, civil society and family life.

Ruwwad Commemorates World Youth Day for Democracy

On October 18, the USAID-funded Ruwwad Palestinian Youth Empowerment Program made possible a “World Youth Day for Democracy” which drew 150 youth from around the West Bank/Gaza to participate in a civic youth forum with leaders from government and civil society. Organized by the Sinjil Youth Club, participants engaged in round-table discussions, a clean-up campaign and theater performances exploring Palestinian democratic values.

Sinjil’s celebration kicked off in the afternoon, with a youth-led drive to clean up village streets. From mid-day until sunset, Youth Club volunteers filled the town’s main road, collecting garbage and re-painting municipal buildings. The notion of ‘participatory community-building’ was a thread that wound through the day’s events. As the youth “clean-up teams” wrapped up their work, another group of young men and women were busy modeling community cooperation—in the kitchen. These local students and Youth Club members had spent much of the day preparing a shared Iftar meal for 100 Sinjil residents, consisting of rice, meat, and salad.

Following the Iftar, young representatives from USAID’s Ruwwad program led Youth Club members over to the town hall—the hub of local democratic decision-making—for a discussion with mayor Imad Masalmah and senior staff. Ruwwad’s Youth Engagement Specialist, Maher Awartani, 22, led the discussion.

Next came the message of the importance of engaging in democratic decision-making—whether for a new soccer van or for a President—during a public panel discussion on “Youth and Democracy,” featuring prominent guest speakers Dr. Azmi Chaibi, director of Transparency Palestine, Dr. Talib Awad, Birzeit University Professor of Democracy and Human Rights, Mr. Aref Jafal, director of the Civic Forum Institute, and Dr. Mohammed Said Hmaidi, director of Service Improvement at CHF International. The speakers also reminded the audience of the strong history of Palestinian democracy, and the need for a continued commitment to citizens’ rights, local rule of law, and public discourse.

At the celebration’s closing ceremony, it was youth who took the lead in presenting a cultural program to the community. Spectators watched young men present an outdoor play about the importance of dialogue and shared decision-making. Young singers then led the audience in traditional songs about Palestinian nation-building, and about the value of working together as a community. The day culminated in the mayor of Sinjil thanking USAID and its Ruwwad program for promoting youth-driven local democracy, and praising youth for their leadership and coordination of the day’s events.
Ruwwad Engagement Specialist represents Palestinian Youth at the United Nations (UN)

At the end of October, Maher Awartani, Youth Engagement Specialist for the Ruwwad program in the West Bank/Gaza traveled to UN headquarters to participate as the Palestinian Youth Ambassador to the United Nations Global Youth Leadership Summit. This summit served as the conclusive event of previous regional summits focusing on how to engage youth in achieving the Millennium Development Goals. While he felt that there could have been more opportunities for intergenerational dialogue, Maher welcomed the exposure to different countries’ development issues, and the opportunity for youth networking, youth advocacy and discussion around holding a regional Arab or Middle East youth summit in the near future.

The following is the website for this summit, please visit: http://www.un.org/youthsummit/

For more information on the Ruwwad program, please contact Chuck Wattles, cwattles@edc.org

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EQuALLS Phase 2 Program: Access to Education in the Philippines

EQuALLS 2 is currently implementing Alternative Learning Systems (ALS) activities. ALS offers a basic education curriculum to out-of-school children and youth (OSCY) in Mindanao, Philippines. Reading, writing, and math skills development are learned in a manner relevant to local livelihood opportunities. Instructional Managers from three Filipino organizations facilitate this process within community learning centers that are managed by the communities. At the end of the 10-month program, children and youth who are prepared are eligible to take a primary school equivalency test. Over 8,000 OSCY are currently enrolled in 160 learning centers.

Under EQuALLS 2, EDC will work to improve the learning outcomes, teaching methods, and community ownership of the ALS program. The three Filipino NGOs involved are Notre Dame Foundation for Charitable Activities, United Bangsamoro Movement for Peace and Development of the University of Southern Mindanao, and The Champagnat Community College of the Notre Dame Marbel University. Other partners include: the Philippine’s Department of Education (DepEd); DepEd of the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM); and local government units.

For more information, please contact Nancy Devine, ndevine@edc.org
Haiti: Out-of-School Youth Livelihood Initiative / IDEJEN

Providing education and livelihood preparation opportunities to out-of-school youth in Haiti, and research to inform the process.

IDEJEN Extension

The USAID Mission in Haiti has officially approved the extension of IDEJEN. The first new activity implemented during this phase was a meeting which took place from October 24th to the 26th to begin the first stages of the development of a national youth policy.

Workshop on National Youth Policy

Between October 24-25 in Petionville, Consultant Jean Cassaigneau, a member of the International Council on National Youth Policy, represented IDEJEN at a Preparatory Workshop organized by the Ministry of Youth, Sports and Civic Action to work on a ‘National Youth, Sports and Civic Action Policy.’ Sixty participants representing both the Ministry and civil society attended, as did representatives from UN agencies and USAID. Based on a workplan agreed upon during his visit, Dr. Cassaigneau will develop a framework to guide the Government of Haiti as they develop and finalize a national youth policy.

For more information, please contact Lisa Austin, laustin@edc.org

Dr. Cassaigneau on an Action Strategy for Haiti's National Youth Policy (NYP)

“A NYP is made of three basic elements: a vision, a mission and an action strategy. As for the first two elements, I mentioned examples from Jamaica, South Africa and Kosovo.

As for the action strategy, I detailed its structure. The strategy should:

- first acknowledge the realities (diagnosis) and define the challenges (prospective)
- then establish strategic priorities with measurable objectives (example from Kosovo National Youth Action Plan 2007-2010)
- set up institutional supports in legislation (Parliament Youth Review entity), in leaders’ training (Youth and Sports National Training entity), and in participation (Inter-governmental Youth/Sports Commission, National Youth/SportNGO/Federations Council)
- structure the Policy’s governance (roles of State Ministry and Parliamentarian Commission in charge) to lead, through communication and stimulation, the Haitian people, and particularly the Haitian youth, to adhere to it.”

From: Mission Report to Haiti, October 23-30

Administrative Updates

Staff Changes

Claudia Nino de Guzman joins EDC’s Global Learning Group (GLG) as a Financial Analyst. Prior to joining EDC, Claudia worked at Copper Rock Capital Partners, a small investment management company, where she assisted the Chief Financial Officer. She also interned at the Volkswagen Investor Relations office in London where she worked for the Head of Investor Relations. Claudia holds Bachelor degrees in Economics and International Relations as well as a minor in Business Administration from Boston University.

Stacey Shorr is GLG’s new Senior Administrative Manager. Stacey spent the previous 51/2 years as a Research Assistant at EDC’s Center for Online Professional Education.