SUCCESS STORY

The Implementation of Education Decentralization: A Three-Day Workshop for National and Sub-National Stakeholders

EQUIP2 has taken the lead in sharing knowledge and expertise on education decentralization around the world. Through its Policy and Issues Briefs, library of decentralization tools, and draft workshop on “The Implementation of Education Decentralization: A Three-Day Workshop for National and Sub-National Stakeholders,” EQUIP2 helps ministries of education and government officials improve the design and implementation of decentralization and effect better sector performance.

With funding from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and in collaboration with programmatic partner Research Triangle Institute (RTI), Academy for Educational Development (AED) Senior Global Education Development Specialist Joe Cohen conducted education decentralization workshops with two EQUIP2 Associate Awards in Spring 2005: the Egypt Education Reform Project (ERP) in March and the Namibia Basic Education Support Project, Phase 3 (BES 3) in May. The workshop’s primary objectives were to:

- Share a common vision of the education sector’s decentralization objectives;
- Facilitate understanding of the link between decentralization and the quality of teaching and learning;
- Communicate lessons learned from international experience with decentralization;
- Explain the complexity and detail required to design and implement decentralization;
- Identify the principal constraints to implementation of education decentralization; and
- Set priorities for moving forward.

In Egypt and Namibia, participants included regional and national representatives from the Ministries of Education and Higher Education, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Local Administration, and the Ministry of Regional and Local Government, Housing and Rural Development, as well as education officials from the regional governments. Since the status of decentralization is unique to each country, the toolkit is customized to the specific context. Topics addressed included examining progress thus far, facing challenges, developing a concrete action plan and timeline for moving forward, ensuring accountability, financing decentralized schools, and identifying the country’s specific legal and institutional framework.

The workshops provided an invaluable forum for various stakeholder groups to build consensus on the importance and achievements of education decentralization and engage in a collegial policy dialogue. The experience in Egypt and Namibia will help EQUIP2 further refine its decentralization tools for presentations in Guatemala, Georgia, and Senegal over the coming year.