

PROJECT COMPLETION ASSESSMENT (no field visit, and thus abbreviated version)

CSO Name: **Asociacion para una Sociedad mas Justa (ASJ)- Transformemos Honduras (TH)**

Project Title: **Capacity Building, Social Auditing and Advocacy for a Stronger Educational System**

Grant Amount: US\$34, 953.46

Dates of Implementation: July 15, 2011- July 15, 2012

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Date of PCA: August 19, 2012

Overview: The project was aimed at improving teacher hiring and assignments. To do this, it would train parents and other volunteers to audit teacher assignments, monitor the number of school days each year, follow up on the teacher hiring process, and check teachers' payroll, as well as take corrective action as needed. The results of the social audits would be disseminated, and used to press for improvements in the education system.

Approach and Project Design: The objective was high-priority, and in accordance with recommendations set out in World Bank education sector studies. Also in line with experience elsewhere in the world, the activities were focused on training parents and other volunteers in the social auditing process in a limited number of municipalities, and to then disseminate the results among as many stakeholders as possible, advocating corrective action as needed. The proposal was modest, and well within the capacity of ASJ/TH. It was well-defined, including clear sections on risks and results indicators.

Consequently, the Relevance and Design of the project should be rated 4 (on a scale of 1-5).

Project Implementation: Implementation was facilitated by a signed understanding with the then Minister of Education, but hampered by an extended teacher strike at the start of the project and a disappointing response from local education authorities to requests for information under the new Law for Access to Public Information. As a result, the data collected are partial, and do not allow for meaningful comparison.

On the positive side, the project outputs were more than projected. Ten municipalities (instead of 8) were covered, 130 local participants (instead of 60) were trained, 250 copies (instead of 200) of the results report were distributed, 310 people participated at the press conferences, the results were published on 3 websites, there were 13 meetings (instead of 12) with representatives of public institutions, international organizations, and NGOs, and there were 8 (instead of 3) radio/TV programs, 4 (instead of 2) on-line publications, and 3 (instead of 2) mass emails. The documentation includes an informative Special Report on the Progress of the Teacher Testing and Hiring Process.

On the negative side, the 3 agreed outcome indicators could not be calculated or do not seem meaningful. The percentage of teachers working as assigned is unavailable owing to a poor response from the responsible authorities. The percentage improvement of hiring based on merit is unavailable owing to the extended teacher strike at the beginning. And the number of teachers justifying their bonus payments or returning illegal payments was 930, but compared to what?

ASJ/TH pointed to the following challenges in project implementation: unwillingness of local authorities, difficulty in obtaining public information regarding teacher testing and hiring, and monitoring the number of school days because of disappointing parent participation in the surveys. This also contributed to a longer implementation period than originally foreseen: 12 months instead of 8, in turn leading to a larger ASJ/TH counterpart contribution: the equivalent of US\$ 14,756.95 instead of the originally agreed US\$12,500.

In all, the Efficiency and Effectiveness of the project should be rated 3.

Conclusions: The project did accomplish a lot as far as social audit training and dissemination of findings is concerned. It strengthened the capacity of the ASJ-TH in helping to improve the education sector, it produced and distributed substantial amounts of relevant information, and it arranged for a host of productive and well-attended meetings with all stakeholders, including the education authorities, parents, NGOs, international donors, the Minister of Education and the President of Honduras. Consequently, much more is now known about teacher attendance, pay, and quality issues and ways to address those. Indeed, implementation was affected by the teacher strike and the poor response of part of the local education authorities, but ASJ-TH has done as much as could be expected, and the attention paid to these issues should be of longer-term benefit.

ASJ-TH has asked for follow-up support, including for textbook procurement and distribution monitoring, and this would seem justified if PTF funding itself were not an issue. If funding had been available and approved, ASJ-TH would have to make even more of an effort to obtain the cooperation of the education authorities. This time, unfortunately, just a letter from the Minister did not ensure this.

To conclude, the Outcome, Impact and Sustainability of this project should be rated 3, and the Replicability should be rated 4.

Overall Score Calculation (weighted): 3.35 (on a scale of 1-5)